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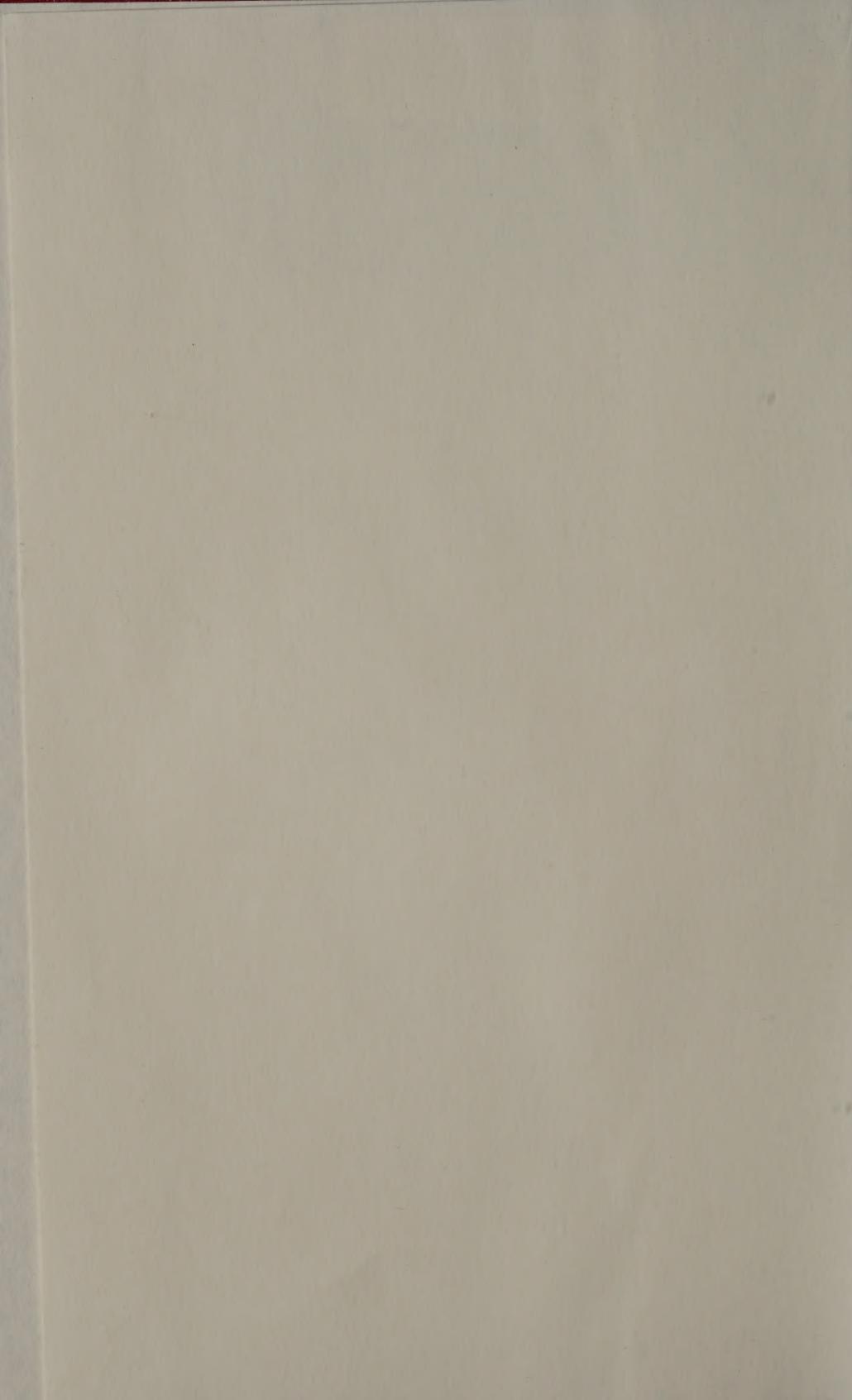
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Beacons of faith



BEACONS of FAITH



Foreword

BEACONS OF FAITH

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Beacons of faith; a completely volunteer project produced to preserve the histories of rural churches, some of which only exist in memory for a few remaining members. Histories of several churches had been published in county newspapers of the past. Therefore, it was largely from these sources that the church stories were preserved.

Two professionals who were responsible for this printed publication were J.B. Coufal, of Hanover, the Marysville Advocate shop superintendent, and Jimmie King of Blue Rapids, Valley Heights teacher and computer expert in type-setting. However, the long ago professional proof reader missed a few errors in spellings for which she apologizes to the writers.

Listed according to page numbers, the corrections are:

1. Page 7, loaves instead of loaf
2. Page 9, denomination instead of donomination
3. Page 28, Shepard instead of Shephard
4. Page 39, Karl Hohn, not Kart Hohn
5. Page 40, Karl Weber instead of Kart Weber
6. 40, Miesenbach, not Messenbach
7. 40, Merklinghaus instead of Merlinghaus
8. Page 59, non-members, instead of non-women
9. Page 87, George Eddy instead of Geroge
10. Page 104, Mound Chapel Church should read Mound Chapel Methodist Church
11. Page 104, true instead of rue
12. Page 119, Delia Luedke, not Elsie
13. Page 128, Cohorst not Chorst

The prairie schooners weaved across the unbounded land and unloaded their wagons. Log cabins and homestead sanctuaries began to take form. The stubborn sod was broken and fields of corn and wheat changed the complexion of the grassland. The railroad pushed its tracks across the prairie. Sometimes the

BEACONS OF FAITH

The Kansas prairie was like the blue sky, a free and boundless highway. There were no fences, section lines, sign posts or billboards to guide the way.

But they came. The Civil War veterans attracted by the free land and the Europeans, who learned of the cheap land offered by the railroads. Many a homesick migrant, strengthening his morale, repeated "The Emigrants Song," written by John Greenleaf Whittier, more than a century ago.

"We cross the prairie as of old

The Pilgrim's crossed the sea

To make the West, as they the East

The homestead of the free."

They came, the man at the plow and the woman at the stove, sturdy pioneers, who foresaw a future filled with promise. Men and women of stuff who withstood the privations of the plains.

The prairie schooners weaved across the unbounded land and unloaded their wagons. Log cabins and homestead shanties began to take form. The stubborn sod was broken and fields of corn and wheat changed the complexion of the grassland. The railroad pushed its tracks across the prairie. Sometimes the

covered wagons that had pushed westward, reversed their position as recurring drouths and grasshopper invasions buffeted the fortunes of the homesteaders.

Yet the stronghearted remained, because they believed. They established the homes, organized the schools and founded the churches--the foundations of civilization.

Sunday school classes and church services conducted by itinerant ministers were held in the white frame rural schools. Then, when an ethnic group--German, Swede, Dane or Irish--came together measured a location, collected cash and volunteer labor and soon a frame building with a tower, topped by a cross, as the spiritual home.

Here they were bonded together by births, baptisms, confirmations, weddings and deaths, the cycle of life.

The scattered rural churches--30 in all--in Marshall county were the beacons of faith for the pioneers.

The pioneer settlers of the prairie are all gone like many of the church buildings. But they bequeathed a heritage of spiritual growth, a sturdiness of character, a respect for one another and for God.

They remain only in the memory of the older generation. When this generation is gone, these stories of the pioneer churches preserves the continuity of their faith and blessings.

The church preservation committee: Eulalia T. Guise, Oretha

Ruetti and Lois Cohorst, has only included the churches of the ghost towns, incorporated villages and rural areas.

The existing rural churches, that are strong and alive some more than a century old, publish their own histories.

This committee only attempts to preserve the forgotten church homes of the early settlers.

Histories of some of the churches had been published in newspapers when the congregations abandoned their church homes. When farms grew larger, families smaller and transportation motorized, congregations merged with nearby town churches of the same faith.

In some instances, there were only bits of information and no photos available.

Many sources, some of them personal, have been used for information in compiling the history of the extinct churches, which the committee believes makes the book more interesting.

Book Cover design by Lois Cohorst

from the oil painting, "Worship at Twilight"

by Byron E. Guise

Typesetting by Jimmy King



ELM CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

By Oretha Ruetti

The Elm Creek Baptist Church, organized in 1873, had services in the Elm Creek School District No. 7 at a fork in the road in the far southeast corner of Elm Creek Twp. six miles northeast of Blue Rapids.

A church building was not erected until 1882. It was built near the school house and dedicated August 13, 1882. The Rev. George Brown of the First Baptist Church of Blue Rapids gave an eloquent dedicatory sermon. It was estimated 700 people were there to enjoy the dinner spread on tables in an adjacent

grove.

The Baptist Church of Blue Rapids and Marshall Center did not have services that Sunday. They all came to celebrate the new Elm Creek Church.

The Elm Creek Church and Marshall Center Church (six miles northeast) shared a minister and built a parsonage midway between the two congregations. Both churches disbanded in the early 1920's. The Elm Creek Church was moved into Blue Rapids and converted into a dwelling.

The Elm Creek Cemetery just south of the fork in the road had no connection with the church. It began as a family burial plot on the M. L. Duncan farm.

Thanksgiving at the Elm Creek schoolhouse on Nov. 27, 1873, was reminiscent of that first gathering in 1621, when thanks were given for a bountiful harvest.

Like the Pilgrims of Plymouth, this community, bound together by a common religion, assembled for a day of thanksgiving marked by fellowship and feasting.

This Thanksgiving festival was the inspiration of the Baptists who conducted church services in the Elm Creek schoolhouse located at a fork in the road in the far southeastern corner of Elm Creek Township some 5 miles northeast of Blue Rapids. They were joined in sponsoring the event by their partners in faith, the Baptists of Reedsville, the Canadian settlement 6 miles to the

northeast in Center Township.

Later these Baptists built churches, with the Elm Creek faction erecting theirs alongside the schoolhouse while the Center Baptists built their church 1 mile north of Reedsville. One minister served the churches, living in a parsonage built midway between the churches.

F. Hamilton, chairman of the festival, assisted by a Mr. Payne and Mrs. Alonzo Ham, had set the hour of the Thanksgiving celebration at 2 p.m. with the supper to be served at 4 p.m., but by mid-afternoon the crowd had become so large the committee feared the schoolhouse could not accommodate them.

A blanket invitation had been issued to all persons living in the area from Reedsville to Blue Rapids. They came in a steady stream of wagons and buggies, pouring down the three roads that converged at the Elm Creek fork. The Elm Creek Echoes columnist of the Blue Rapids Times estimated the crowd at 150, an unbelievable large crowd for the little crackerbox schoolhouse, but no one was turned away. When the Baptists congregated there was always room for one more.

They came carrying their food in baskets, boxes, buckets, and tubs. One woman, who had packed her offering for the meal in a trunk, personally supervised the unloading by calling out warnings when she thought it was being tilted too far in one direction.

The men assembled a table of planks, stoked up the fire in the potbellied stove and set the coffee pot to boil. Much to everyone's surprise and amusement, Deacon Asahel Dexter of Reedsdale volunteered to supervise the children's games in the schoolyard while the meal was being readied.

After some good-natured repartee, the womenfolk convinced James McAtee to serve as official carver. While he sliced off succulent strips of roasted turkey and chicken, the women spread the boards with big bowls of creamed turnips, brown crocks heaped high with golden squash and sweetpotatoes, pans of cinnamon flecked apples basked in their own simmering juice and an assortment of vegetables that represented the fruition of the past summer's labor.

Crusty loafs of bread made from grist mill flour were complemented with golden molds of freshly-churned butter and glasses of scarlet and purple jellies that had summered on the wild plum bushes and wild grape vines. The women proudly set out pies of apple and pumpkin, cakes that tingled with spices and molasses and according to the newspaper, "all the goodies anyone needed to wish for."

The brown "meaty" smell of roasted fowl and the scent of spices suffused the warm room and drifted out the door to the schoolyard, where hungry children wondered how much longer it would be before they were called to eat.

The crowd was served in three shifts, with each group returning thanks for the bountiful repast before sitting down to the meal they had anticipated all afternoon. As one group finished and filed out to make room for the next shift, women washed plates and silverware in large tubs placed on a long bench in the rear of the schoolroom.

When the last appetite was sated, the food remaining on the table was repacked in the boxes and the table hastily dismantled to make room for the worship service.

After everyone was shoehorned into place, the church choir opened the service with a rousing hymn with the accompaniment on the pump organ played by a Miss Calkins. Mr. Payne gave a short sermon, thanking the "Giver of an abundant harvest and the Provider of all blessings of life," and then asked Almeron Brooks to give a prayer of thanks.

The choir and congregation sang several reverent hymns of thanks to set the mood for an address by Deacon Dexter, who stressed the true meaning of Thanksgiving. J. Palmer, who lived south of Blue Rapids, gave a short talk and his wife entertained with instrumental music. Mr. and Mrs. John McKee were then called upon for a vocal duet.

By the time the service was over many of the younger children had fallen asleep, which meant both sleepy youngsters and food boxes would have to be carried to the wagons. After a dark

chilling ride home, they would be lugged into a cold house where the fire in the stove had turned to ashes. Teams would have to be unhitched and bedded down for the night, and despite the late hour cows in some barnyards would still be waiting to be milked.

Such was the life of these worshippers who had given their thanks for their blessings. There was no complaining or muttering. Instead these good people rose to their feet, lifted their voices in song and rang the rafters of the Elm Creek schoolhouse as they sang "America."

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

by Oretha Ruetti and Rev. Susan Daniel

The Methodist Episcopal Church South in the far southwest corner of Section 28, Walnut Twp. was organized in 1889.

On July 17, 1889, a Joseph Nider deeded one acre for a churchyard to the following trustees: J.W. Dyer, John Keefover, Jefferson Cox, and Thomas Ricker all of Marshall County and John Tull, Riley County.

In June, 1902, the following trustees deeded the land back to Nider: T.J. Wolverton, J.W. Dyer and C.A. Nider.

The designation South does not refer to location with respect to the town, rather South refers to the alignment of this church with the donomination Methodist Episcopal Church, South which

was predominant in the South of the United States, and which was pro-slavery. That means that a group of original Waterville settlers were also pro-slavery and that this was important enough to them to found a Methodist Episcopal church, South as opposed to a Methodist Episcopal Church (North).

A history of the Waterville United Methodist Church, written in 1970 by Miss Florence Choate, conveys the following information relative to the further history of what was originally the Methodist Episcopal Church, South of Waterville.

Rev. J. F. Dennis was appointed to the Waterville charge in March 1899. During his six years, 121 members were received into the church from probation and by letter.

In the fall of 1902 Rev. Dennis assisted by Rev. W. D. Hamilton (a local farm boy who had been converted at a revival meeting in 1893, licensed to preach in 1894 and ordained in 1897) held a five day meeting in a church northwest of town which had been built by the Methodist Church, South, and later was used by the Salvation Army for a time. As a result of these meetings the Mt. Hope Church was organized with 35 members.

In 1918, Rev. M. A. Good came from White City to Waterville. Prior to Rev. Good's ministry the Mt. Hope church membership had been absorbed into the Waterville church and the church closed.

In 1922 remodeling of the Methodist Episcopal Church

(North) was undertaken. This included putting a basement under the church, refinishing the old building, adding an annex to the south, and brick veneering the building. In September 1923 the remodeled church was dedicated. The Mt. Hope Church was razed and used in the new building. Mrs. Eunice Hamilton Hanke, Waterville, recalls attending Sunday School at the Mt. Hope Church.

"I was about five years old and I went with my oldest brother, Leamon, but I wouldn't leave his side.

"After services a Mrs. Peterson told me if I would come to her class the next Sunday she would give me the pretty card she was holding. I think it was a bookmark with a horseshoe entwined with flowers on it. I thought it was the prettiest thing I'd ever seen. So I went to her class the next Sunday."

Mrs. Hanke also recalls when the Salvation Army set up their tent between the church and the Hamilton farm, which was one-half mile west of the church. Her parents joined the Salvation Army.

Her father was George Hamilton, and her mother's parents were the Isaac Bairds, who attended Mt. Hope. Other church families she remembers were Sam Hamilton, Mapes, Keefover, Anderson and Peterson.

The Mt. Hope Methodist Church in Walnut Twp. 5 1/2 miles northwest of Waterville.



MARSHALL CENTER BAPTIST CHURCH

by Oretha Ruetti

All the Canadians who settled in Center Twp. near the village of Reedsville were not Episcopalians. Several families were devout Baptists and held their services in the Reedsville schoolhouse while the Episcopalians met in their church built west of the schoolhouse.

In 1884 they built their Marshall Center Baptist Church one mile north of Reedsville on land donated by John F. McKee. A

cemetery was plotted north of the church and the entire area bordered with Osage orange hedge.

Founding families were Dexter, Ankeny, McKee, Sanderson, Oakley, Riley, Campbell and Jester. Of the 82 names on the Sunday School roll of 1890-95, 21 were Dexters and 17 McKees.

Marshall Center shared a minister with another rural Baptist Church at Elm Creek, seven miles southwest. The churches owned jointly a parsonage built midway between the two churches. Each church paid \$300 toward the preacher's annual salary.

Early records show dissension among these deeply religious people. Purchase of the first organ created a stir for some believed that a musical instrument in the church as a "tool of the Devil."

Religious discipline was strict. A deacon discovered some of the young people at a skating rink in Home City on Saturday afternoon. They answered to a committee about their errant ways. Later a deaconship was taken from a leading church member and the hand of fellowship withdrawn from his daughters, who had been bold enough to go dancing.

Reedsville had faded out of existence in the early 1900's leaving only the school house and cemetery. A new Baptist Church was organized in the new town of Winifred in 1910. Thirty-one members of the Marshall Center Church were granted

their letters to join the Winifred Baptist Church.

With the dwindling of its numbers Marshall Center was forced to close in 1920. The weathered church stood empty and silent behind the hedge rows until the late 1930's when it was sold to Guy Rice, Marysville funeral director, who dismantled the building for its lumber. The hedge was routed out and the cemetery made a part of the Center Twp. Cemetery District and is now maintained with a tax levy.

CHRISTIAN CHURCHES ORGANIZED

The religious movement known locally as the Christian Church was begun in 1809 in western Pennsylvania by Elder Alexander Campbell and his father Elder Thomas Campbell, theretofore Scotch seceder Presbyterians. Their plea was union of the then divided sects on the basis of the New Testament. At this time Walter Scott a student and admirer of Alexander Campbell began a similar movement in the western Reserve region of Ohio and Barton W. Stone of Kentucky, a Presbyterian preacher had a vision similar to that of the Campbell's and began

to preach Christian union.

The Disciples of Christ lay special emphasis on the principles of Christian unity, universal fellowship, and brotherhood, spiritual liberty and democracy and the abolition of all divisional creeds and ecclesiastical tyranny. It is their endeavor to speak where the scriptures speak and be silent where the scriptures are silent.



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH AT BIGELOW

by Eulalia T. Guise

The scent of fresh cedar of a Christmas tree, newly cut combined with the odor of burning tallow candles will never again fragrant the first Christian church in Marshall county.

No longer will be heard the sing-song recitation of poems and exercises or the changing voices singing Christmas carols echoing through the strong walls on Christmas Eve.

The final Christmas program has been given in the Christian church in Bigelow, a building which served its faithful band of

members since 1884.

The oldest Christian church in Marshall county, sold to the government nearly two years ago stands, lonely and gray in the valley, its vine-covered leaves still clinging to the wall.

Now the property of the U.S. Government the church building silently awaits its doom, either to be dismantled or inundated by flood waters of the Tuttle Creek reservoir which sealed the death of the tiny church.

Only in the memory of the few members are the Christmas Eve observances evergreen in recollections.

Although the church was erected in 1884 as the first permanent organization of the Church of Christ in Marshall county, through the influence of W. B. Irvin, who located in Marshall county on the Black Vermillion near the Merrimac schoolhouse in 1869.

A young man of Christian faith, Alonzo Burr, conducted meetings in the Antioch school house in District 7. Irvin and Elder DeWitt Griffis were instrumental in organizing a congregation and Sunday school was held regularly and occasional worship services held.

Elder Pardee Butler, who was forced to leave Atchison, because of his fearless denunciation of slavery and methods adopted on public affairs by its adherents, served the congregation in the early years.

After Jake Inman opened the rock quarries, and platted the

town of Bigelow in the narrow valley of slough grass, he furnished both the land and rock for the building of a permanent church home for the Christian congregation.

Among some of the other founders were H.A. Inman, John and Ira Gumm, Ed Blaney, Elders Irvin and Griffis. They erected the church by volunteer labor.

There were from 50 to 55 persons in the congregation, considered large at the time.

Only resident pastor was James Stuart, also a school teacher, according to Mrs. Griffis, who lived in a house on a hill, as there never was a parsonage for a minister. In later years the church was served by senior students from Manhattan Bible College and the last minister to serve the church was Dave Hartenburger.

A source of pride in the history of the venerable church is that one member became a minister, Rev. Ira Griffis, Nelson, MO.

Nearly every year revival meetings were held with a visiting evangelist conducting services nightly for one or two weeks. Frequently they were the old fashioned exhorters and one of the most popular was Dr. Burnham from the Blue Hills of Kentucky.

Then the familiar words of the evangelism hymn, "Just As I Am" was a plea for conversion.

Climaxing the revivals were the mass baptisms when the Black Vermillion served as a baptismal font. There were two favorite spots for baptizing on the creek, one south and the other south

west of Bigelow, according to Mrs. Oscar Griffis.

The last revival held at Bigelow and the most successful in memory of Mrs. Griffis was conducted in mid-winter.

"There were 15 to 20 converts baptized and they had to cut the ice," Mrs. Griffis recalled. "Brother Humprey conducted the meeting, and the baptism took place in December."

In the more flush years of the congregation members purchased a piano and installed stained glass windows in the native limestone structure. A Ladies Aid organization also flourished for a short period.

But with the decline of population in the Bigelow area as young flock left the community and older members died, the congregation began to dwindle so that few were left to worship in the church, a memorial to the staunch pioneers.

Final worship service was conducted by the Rev. Dyer Campbell, Topeka, executive secretary of the Christian churches of Kansas, when the church was sold to the government, the first property to be acquired in Bigelow about two years ago. The government paid \$5,720 to the congregation for the property.

At that time it was decided to use the funds to build a chapel in Antioch cemetery.

On membership roll, in addition to Mrs. Griffis and A.B. Griffis were Mrs. Harry Potter, Mrs. Frank Reinhart, W.C. Griffis, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Winter, and Mrs. Floyd Armstrong

and son, Robert. The latter two moved to Topeka.

source: "An Affair of the Past"

by Byron E. and Eulalia T. Guise



NORTH ELM CHRISTIAN CHURCH

by Bryon E. Guise

Members of the congregation of North Elm Creek Christian church observed the fiftieth anniversary of the church in 1952.

The church, located 3 1/2 miles east of Marietta, was the outgrowth of a movement of early pioneers who desired to worship as they pleased. First meetings were held in school houses as early as 1880 until the church was built two years after the turn of the century.

The congregation, consisted of a small group, organized June 20, 1880, what was then called The Church of Christ of North Elm. The elders were E. Blaney and D. Ford and the deacons W.S. Jennings, J. Harrison and C.A. Balderson.

First meetings of the small congregation were held in a schoolhouse about half a mile northwest of the present church site. When a fire burned down that school building the members met in what was Balderson school district No. 108, one mile straight south of the present building. During the summer the congregation worshipped outside the school in an arbor, and by the end of the century the membership had reached 105.

Leaders of the congregation saw the need for a church building. Gradually the idea gained momentum and in January, 1902, subscriptions were accepted to start the project. Nearly every person in the community contributed.

Early in the spring of 1902, a few members gathered where the present building stands to measure and layout the ground for the new church. Among those present were: Benjamin Knight, C. Balderson, Frank Balderson, John Knight, Myers Withey, W. Faulk, Danial Rathburn, Matthew Bigham and Charles T. Guise.

Meanwhile the services of W.A. Watson, Marysville architect, had been secured and the plans were drawn. Benjamin Knight gave the stone for the foundation. This came from a quarry on his farm. The stone was hauled to the foundation site.

When the foundation was finished the cornerstone was laid by Balderson and Guise, the service being conducted by the Rev. Charles Shepard.

Knight who watched the progress of the building and assisted in the work, saw the need for a belfry. He made a contribution and others gave sufficient money to purchase the bell, which was placed in the belfry.

Mrs. A.D. Carson, gave the communion stand covers, and J.A. Kelley, also of Oketo, the chair for the pulpit.

The building was constructed by Santford Unger, Home City contractor.

When the structure was finished the dedication was set for September, 1902. The Rev. Charles Shepard, church pastor, delivered the dedicatory sermon and he had a large audience. Attention was called that day that the names of all persons who had contributed to the church were placed in a box in the cornerstone.

In his remarks that day the Rev. Shepard noted:

"In view of the generous and substantial assistance received and kindness always shown us while erecting this church we desire to announce that although this building is owned and controlled by the North Elm Creek Christian Church that its doors will always be open to any or all persons who may wish to use it for preaching or worship no matter by whatsoever name or

denomination they are known."

Improvements were made on the church structure from time to time and an east wing was added when the congregation purchased the church at Marietta, August 7, 1925, after it was dissolved. After the wing was added fire destroyed the North Elm church building when lightning struck August 13, 1932.

Members of the church set themselves to the task of building a new church building. This structure was completed and dedicated April 17, 1933.

Golden anniversary of the church 's founding was observed Sunday, August 30, 1952. On that occasion Mrs. Laura Balderson, Ed Philippi and Chas. T. Guise were the only persons present of the 11 members of the church at the time it was dedicated.

At the time of the 1952 dedication other charter members living were: John W. Foulk, John Philippi, Matthew Bigham, Mrs. Ella Alves, Mrs. Eva Heiserman, Mrs. Minerva Bigham, Mrs. Susie King and Thomas Philippi.

Among the earliest pastors at the time the congregation was meeting at various places were: Rev. Burnam; Rev. John Bain who also was pastor of the church at Reedsville; Rev. Denton Collins, and the Rev. Charles Shepard who also was pastor of the congregation when the first was built and dedicated in 1902.

Among the other pastors that followed him were: Rev. Lew

Myers, Rev. M.J. Boyer, Rev. A. W. Osterhout, Rev. R.C. Howard, Rev. Harry Melendy, Rev. Orville Phillips, and Rev. Leroy Leland. Many student pastors from Cotner College, Lincoln, Neb. and Manhattan Bible College served the church from time to time.

The late Edna Balderson and Josie Philippi were the first new members of the church after the building was dedicated.

The late C.A. Balderson served as elder of the church from 1901 until his death in 1923.

Similar to other rural churches, social life revolved around the spiritual center, which included not only Sunday school classes for all ages, but parties in the farm homes of the teachers and Christian Endeavor for the teenagers and young adults.

Tradition included the Children's day programs, exercises, which necessitated practice several times of dialogues and recitations, which were presented on a June Sunday morning followed by a basket dinner with tables set in the shade trees on the lawn.

Then there were the after harvest homemade ice cream socials when a few men challenged one another of who could eat the most dishes of ice cream.

When the fall crops were harvested every one looked forward to the community Thanksgiving dinners at the church when a short Thanksgiving service was held followed by a big dinner.

Farm wives brought not only one basket of food but two or three.

It was not long until a large cedar tree was cut from nearby North Elm creek, where baptisms of members were held and the tree placed near the altar as practice began for the annual Christmas program and the arrival of jolly Santa Claus.

However when farms grew larger and families smaller, and the congregation diminished also by death, there were no longer enough members to support a minister, so the remaining few of the congregation voted to merge with First Christian Church Marysville.

The church building was sold at public auction October 1, 1964, to James Simon and Virgil Keller, Frankfort, who razed the church.

source: The Marysville Advocate



CHRISTIAN CHURCH AT MINA

by Eulalia T. Guise

After the railroad tracks were laid in 1887, a town was platted six miles south of Summerfield, where J.R. Sittler had built a warehouse in 1888 and bought grain.

A year later W.G. Wooley and Newman Erb, laid out a town and named it Mina, for the wife of Sittler.

The ghosts of the trading post, return now only in memory to those who remember Saturday night in a small town, worship services on Sunday morning and baseball games in summer.

Lost forever are the tolling of bells, calling the faithful to worship Sunday morning in the Christian church or the children

of the school district to classes in the white, frame school next door to the box-like home.

In the level rich farm community of Marshall county, where millet was king of the fields, Mina served the nearby farm families with the necessities of life, plus worship, education, culture and recreation.

However one couple, Mr. and Mrs. Loyal McAtee, who lived on a farm two miles from the townsite, to whom the lifestyle of the town in its bloom before World War I, is a vivid memory. They remembered the dedicated Sunday school teacher, Stella Larkin Stirrat, and the baptizing on Sunday afternoon in Larkin's creek, as wagons and buggies wound their way to the creek bank.

When the horses were tied to the trees in the woods, the people alighted and gathered at the creek.

After the scripture and prayer, they remember how the evangelist waded waist-deep in the creek, and with proper words, the preacher gently but firmly dunked the candidates under the water.

Successfully 68 times, as the congregation's number grew during the pre-motor car age.

A wheel spoke design over the front door of the Christian church, dedicated June 16, 1895, was the symbol that drew attention from a similar white box-like structure, the Mina school, that stood next door.

A church fund started by Miss Emma Detweiler in 1894, gave the church home a start and on the day of dedication pledges and cash paid the debt of \$700 on the building.

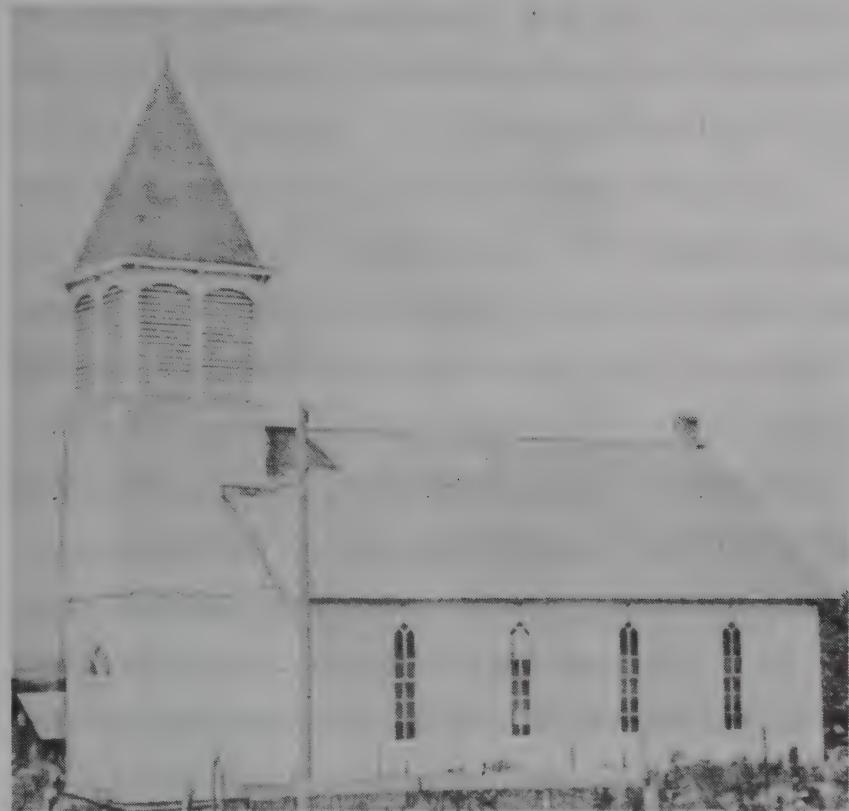
First pastor was the evangelist I.F. Cook, followed by Rev. Beach. For many years Rev. Chas. Shephard alternated Sundays with the congregation of North Elm Christian church east of Marietta. Finally services were conducted only on the second and fourth Sundays and Rev. Allen served in 1923.

The school was built three years later and opened in 1898 with May Stevenson the first teacher.

World War II years brought a decrease in population and the school closed in 1945 when there were only two pupils enrolled.

However the church congregation had disbanded many years earlier. A neighborhood farmer Charles Gurtler purchased the building and razed it for a far different purpose.

source: "An Affair of the Past"



MARIETTA EVANGELICAL CHURCH

by Lois Cohorst

At the turn of the century, there was a little town in the northeastern part of Marshall county called Marietta, Kansas. The town was set along the east side of the Big Blue River and served a rural community. To service the town, there was a school called Bommer, a bank, a city hall, a grocery, post office, two elevators, a produce store, lumber yard, and a blacksmith shop. In that day, the Union Pacific branch of the railroad

followed the Big Blue River from Lincoln, Nebraska to Manhattan, Kansas, and passed through the Marietta depot which also housed the telegraph office.

Although the little town was up and coming, it lacked the spiritual guidance of a church. Services and Sunday school was held in the city hall prior to 1901. Services were held on Sunday afternoons. Marietta borrowed Reverend Shinberger from Blue Springs, Nebraska, who after his morning service there, drove a horse and buggy to preach again. The Reverend Shinberger was from the United Evangelical denomination, which was a break-away from the Pennsylvania German Methodists.

Pastor Shinberger was a short, heavy-set man with a bald head. Without screens on the open windows of the hall, flies attacked the people in hot weather. People swatted and cooled themselves with hand-fans. When they squatted on Reverend Shinberger's bald head, he swatted with his hands and never missed a note in his song or a word of his sermon.

Among early day congregational songs were "Jesus Loves Me" "Precious Jewels" and "You Must Not Work on Sunday."

"You Must Not Work on Sunday" changed words with each verse.

The words were,

"You must not work on Sunday

For Working is a sin;

But you can work on Monday,
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday,
Friday and Saturday
"Till Sunday comes again."

Other verses varied with "You must not wash, iron, sweep, now, plow, and such so that the song was a perfect time filler for however long it was needed.

Even though the City Hall services were well attended, the people wanted a church of their own and Pastor Shinberger encouraged it. Of course, it should be Evangelical. The Lutz family offered ground at the top of a hill just east of their home and the idea grew.

Controversy came about when Mrs. Angus McLeod, an active church member, song leader and organist, wanted the church to be Presbyterian instead of Evangelical. Regardless, a white rectangular frame Evangelical Church with a steeple and belfry was built on the hill and Mrs. McLeod never stepped foot inside it. Dedication was in 1901.

The church had double doors from the outdoors into the assembly room. There was a red brick chimney on the north end, four windows on both the east and west sides, and a partial basement under the northwest part of the church. The foundation was higher on the west which was the down-hill side. Fuel, coal and cobs were stored in the basement.

Inside there was a one-step high carpeted platform with a railing, and it covered three-fourths of the northeast end of the assembly room. There was a built-in pulpit, and the organ and choir chairs were on the east side. The church had all the necessities except pews. Seating was provided by fastening chairs to a board making short or long rows as needed. Rods hanging from the ceiling provided attachments for the four-mantle propane lights.

Outside, there was a good-sized yard on the west side of the church and hitching rails on the south side.

The church was organized. The Bishop was the head officer. District superintendent answered to the Bishop and pastors answered to the superintendents. Elders answered to the pastor. Bishop Dubbs was in office at the time the church was built at Marietta and he was on hand for the dedication.

Once each quarter, the church held a district meeting in which they conducted business. That Sunday, the service included communion provided by members of the church families. Bread, grape juice, plates, glasses and napkins were needed for the special service and communion was open. It was offered to anyone who wished to partake, even members from other denominations.

One Sunday, someone forgot to provide the ingredients and a quick plea for help was issued. The lady who came to their aid

provided real wine and the church ladies found out just in time to make the change to grape juice. Although many denominations used real wine, it would have been a great catastrophe had it happened in that church in those days.

Visiting Bishops and pastors boarded with neighboring members until it finally happened that a permanent pastor was appointed. His name was Mr. Charley Taylor and he was the first full-time pastor of the church. Many said he didn't do the best job of delivering a sermon, but he was sincere. Whenever he made calls, he carried his work clothes in his buggy and was prepared to help people make hay, thrash, or tend their livestock. People came to the church out of respect for him, and the congregation grew.

Charley Taylor's heaviest cross to bear was his wife. She was charming one moment and nasty the next. She threw temper tantrums when things didn't go her way and was not especially well liked among the parishioners. The Taylors were soon assigned to another charge.

Pastor Troyer filled the vacancy. He had two daughters, Pearl and Alma and a son, Carl. Both girls were assets to their father with church work. Alma played the organ, and both girls sang beautifully. The Troyers kept the church active and faithfully served the community several years.

As time passed, there were a few changes. An Epworth

League was organized. It was for the purpose of developing public leadership among the young people. Sunday morning services continued and Sunday evening services were added. A choir sang at the morning service with congregational singing in the evening. Kneeling was added and several complained because it was hard on their knees. During prayers that continued until it seemed that all places in the world had been blessed, some became so stiff they couldn't get up. Once it was said that they prayed so long their knees couldn't take it, and they began to pray that the praying would end.

Pastor Troyer started mid-week services called prayer meetings which were held in homes. While at the Lutz family home, Grandma Kiler sat in her rocking chair without participating in the service because she was hard of hearing. She only responded when, or if, they sang "Beulah Land." Then she clapped and shouted and no one knew if they should be happy or scared.

Some family meetings were more pleasant than others, but the mid-week prayer meetings became as important to the Evangelical members as the Sunday services.

Later, the pastors of the Marietta Evangelical and the Oketo Methodist were encouraged to host a revival meeting at least once a year to stimulate members and add new ones. All were invited and once, during the summer meetings held in a big tent

on the Bommer school ground, the invitation to come forward was given. A Catholic family, who attended but didn't understand much about revivals, rose one or two at a time and struggled to get out of the service. They had to do penance for that misdeed, but it was understood that they were forgiven.

Another time the churches merged and held a revival in Marysville. Young people of Marietta Evangelical were encouraged to attend. The various church choirs were joined and the music was quite beautiful. However, it was during the sermon that a man from another denomination rose and objected to the subject matter. He rose from his seat and called the preacher a liar. Ushers came quickly to take him away all the while he pointed and yelled, "He's a liar, he's a liar."

One revival singer told her life story saying that as a child from the poor section of Omaha, she began smoking cigarettes, and involving herself in other vices. She became a prostitute and used morphine until she lost her voice and was about to take her own life. She happened to pass a mission and stopped to listen to the music. She promised God that if He would give her voice back, she would use it to His glory. Her voice returned and she became a revival singer. The revival stories were to be good lessons for the young people of the church.

The church provided programs in which the children had short pieces to recite and drills to perform. There were Easter

and Christmas programs with much singing. The church was packed with each program and people had to be turned away. Pastor Troyer instigated many other programs, such as ice cream socials, box suppers, and other community events through the church. In time, the Troyers left and other pastors replaced him.

Several young, unmarried, pastors officiated at the church, which always gave the community's young ladies a stir. Once, a handsome Mr. William Pfautz from the East filled the vacancy. He had a beautiful singing voice. The young girls from the Oketo area found him attractive. After a while he chose to marry Alma Travelute and the parsonage was occupied again with a family.

The church's membership began to drop as the rural population failed to support it. In 1925 the church accepted its death but was sold to North Elm Church and reincarnated as an addition to that facility. However, as God would have it, lightning struck and the entire establishment burned to the ground. The North Elm Church was rebuilt but all traces of the United Evangelical at Marietta was gone.

Still, only ghostly memories of the church on the hill that truly served as a beacon on the hill, remain. Marietta remembers the church as being the life of the community in a time long past. It provided happiness and contentment while living through years of daily problem solving in the early days.

Throughout each of life's hurdles, people of the United

Evangelical Church at Marietta were able to mount on wings like an eagle and soar above their problems.

source: Eldora Mann Hoffman



ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

by Eulalia T. Guise

End of a pioneer era in churches came June 16, 1951, when St. John's German Evangelical Lutheran church, located northeast of Oketo in Balderson township, was sold to the highest bidder by sealed bids.

Removal of the building constructed by pioneers of the Evangelical Lutheran faith in 1883 closed another chapter in the fast disappearing country churches from the rural scene.

The small white frame church building, designed to serve the spiritual needs of the German emigrant community, had long been closed and members had united with the Marysville Evangelical United Church of Christ, Tenth and Elm.

But established long before the church was constructed is the well kept cemetery in the church yard. Now a part of the Balderson-Richland twp. church cemetery district, the first burial was in 1871.

Two acres of ground were contributed for the cemetery and church in 1879 by Kart Hohn, brother of the late August Hohn, Marysville merchant. The deed was recorded in the name of the trustees of the Evangelical Congregation of Honrath for the sum of \$1.00.

Predecessor of St. John's church of Mission Creek--so named because the community was referred to as Mission Creek, which flowed through northeast Balderson township--was the Otoe Mission House or Stolzenbach. It was here that the German emigrants were organized in 1869 by the Rev. A. Bathe, a missionary sent to Marysville to organize a German church.

Rev. Bathe conducted a first Christmas service in 1869 in the Otoe Indian agency. The Mission House, a three-story building,

was constructed of stone by the Eastern Presbyterian Church Society in 1857 on the Indian reservation bordering the Kansas-Nebraska State line.

When a tornado tore off the roof of the third story, a new roof was placed on the second story and the second floor was used for church services. The Stolzenbach post office, named for the village where many of the Germans had migrated to Kansas was on the first floor with the Indian agency.

After district No. 30 school house was built on the Ludwig Merklinghaus farm in the 1870's, church services were held in the school building conducted by the minister of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Marysville.

By 1883 when Rev. H.H. Barkman was the minister, he inspired the pioneers to build a church on land already donated by Mr. and Mrs. Karl P.W. Hohn to the organized congregation of Honrath.

Lumber was hauled from Liberty, Neb., the nearest market center as Summerfield had not been platted. Fritz Werner, who had built the Merklinghaus school, built the church with volunteer services of men of the congregation.

Among the Germans who were founders of the church were Ludwig Merlinghaus (also know as Louie), Jake Walker, Kart Hohn, Carl Naaf, Frank Naaf, Fred Newman, Peter Lindenberg, Henry Hund, Kart Weber, Otis Johnson, Ed Missenback,

Wienand Vogel, Carl Zimmerman, William Garrison, George Grauer, Frederick J. Heiserman, Johann March and possibly others.

Services were held once a month with the Rev. H.H. Barkman, Marysville, its first pastor. He served also Frieden's church, Home City and Immanuel church, Herkimer.

As all members of the church were German immigrants, the services were conducted in German language. Confirmation classes were held and confirmants learned the catechism in German. Early residents recalled that Sunday school was held regularly and a parochial school was conducted a short time by Edward Leftke, a pioneer pastor.

When Pastor E. Steffens was serving Frieden's Lutheran church, Home City, he served St. John's church also from 1892-1901. During this time he conducted confirmation classes. Registered in the Home City church history among first confirmants are: Christian Grauer and Regina Lindenberg 1894; Otto Weber, Ernst Lindenberg, Emma Stauf, Emma Naaf, Pauline Weber and Lysie (Lizzie) Marz; in 1897 Bertha, Otto, Rudolph and Carl Naaf and Rosina Vogel.

Names from the congregation were few among later confirmants including Franz Naaf, 1903; Arthur Vogel, Christian and Matilda Hoffman, Ernst Hohn and August Naaf, 1906 and Ada Lindenberg in 1907.

In 1910 when Rev. Adolph Palm was resident pastor, the Ladies Aid was organized with 15 charter members, with Mrs. Henry Breunsback, first president.

Among members from the beginning were Mrs. Frank Naaf, Mrs. Edmund Vogel, Mrs. Wienand Vogel, Mrs. Ben Hopper, Mrs. Henry Brauch, Mrs. Martha Johnson Plegge, Mrs. Wm. Hahn, Sr., Mrs. Albert Wittmus, Mrs. Frank Krotsch, Mrs. Rudolph Krotsch, Mrs. August Krebs, Mrs. Dan Bachoritch, Mrs. Frank Naaf, Jr., Mrs. John Schneider, Mrs. Wm. Schneider, Mrs. Lena Wahlen, and Mrs. Carl Lindenberg.

In 1920 there was a rekindling of interest in the church and Ladies Aid, as many young people became members of the dwindling congregation due to deaths of the founding fathers. The Aid again became a flourishing group of more than 40 members and lent necessary financial support for the church through its annual bazaars, quilting bees and serving lunches at farm auctions.

During World War I, the members all of German ancestry proved their patriotism, as meetings were converted to Red Cross work and they knitted and sewed bandages.

A project of the Ladies Aid was to make bed comforters which were given to families whose homes were damaged or destroyed by fire or other disasters.

In 1930 the group joined the S.O.S. club sponsored by Esther

Caldwell, Frankfort, who helped shut-ins all over the Midwest.

In recent years after the church was disbanded and needed no financial support, charitable organizations were remembered with cash contributions, including the March of Dimes, Red Cross, American Heart Association and Cancer Control programs.

One traditional menu to which the Aid was addicted was kaffee kuchen, homemade bread and jelly and coffee.

The Ladies Aid was disbanded December 31, 1953, at the home of Mrs. Rudolph Krotsch, 1506 May, Marysville. A final reunion of members was held at the home of Mrs. Philip Brucker. Present were Mrs. Henry Breunsbach and Ruth, Mrs. Alfred Hopper, Mrs. Lena Wahlen, Mrs. Dan Bachoritch, Mrs. August Krebs, Mrs. E.O. Keck, Mrs. Arthur Vogel, Mrs. Glen Reis, Mrs. Frank Naaf, Jr., Mrs. Herman Wahlen, Mrs. Ernest Brauch, Mrs. Ed Brucker, Mrs. Wm. Schneider, Mrs. Rudolph Krotsch and Mrs. Vick Crisp.

Mrs. Ed Brucker served as secretary 32 years from 1921 until the organization was dissolved in 1953. Mrs. Philip Brucker served as president from 1921 to 1953. Other officers were Mrs. Ernest Brauch, vice president and Mrs. Vick Crisp, treasurer.



GERMAN EVANGELICAL IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF HERKIMER

German Evangelical Immanuel Church of Herkimer, an outgrowth of the Marysville church, was located on the north outskirts of the village.

Many of the congregations were organized long before the churches were established or the deeds put on record, according to the late Minnie Larson, Marshall County Register of Deeds.

The first rural church deed placed on record September 5, 1870, was the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Herkimer, Kansas.

However Emma Forter's Marshall County History says the church was organized in 1890, because distance and growth of population in the surrounding territory seemed to justify the separation.

Rev. E. Vogt had charge of the congregation from 1892 to 1897, followed by H. Huebschmann to 1902; H. Grosse to 1908; Rev. L.B. Slupianek to 1912, who later served the Marysville church.

The church was erected in 1893 at a cost of \$1000. Membership in 1915 consisted of 39 families or a congregation of 163.

However after the motor car age, the congregation dwindled and they voted to disband on April 1, 1946. The building was sold to Zion Lutheran Church, Herkimer and was added as a school and church hall.

The bell was given to the Marysville United Church of Christ and was tolled the first time June 15, 1948, for Mrs. Barbette Raemer Miller, a long time organist of the Herkimer Church. Both church bells were rung together.



MT. ZION EPISCOPAL CHURCH AT REEDSVILLE

By Oretha Ruetti

In 1869 Allen Reed guided a convoy of covered wagons from Peterborough, Ontario, Canada to Marshall County where Reed and his fellow Canadians bought land in the southwestern area of Center Twp. Reed bought land on each side of a crossroad at the convergence of four Center Twp. sections (20, 21, 28, 29). On the northwest corner he built a general store and Edmond Adams put up a blacksmith shop.

On the northeast corner Reed donated land for the Reedsville School District 40 and a schoolhouse was built atop the gentle rise of land. When Reed's infant daughter, Sarah Lily, died Reed

laid out a cemetery on the westward slope below the schoolyard.

Several of the Canadians were Episcopalians and they organized and built the Mt. Zion Church in the northwest corner of the cemetery land in 1874. In an interview in 1973 the late Dan Hunt of Blue Rapids, whose parents bought supplies at Reed's store told the story he had often heard about the building of this church.

There were two groups of Episcopalians in Marshall County--those at Reedsville and another group 14 miles southwest in Blue Rapids. They held joint meetings, but as soon as plans were made to build a church each faction wanted the church in their town. Blue Rapids Episcopalians insisted it should be in their town because it was much bigger and beginning to boom with industry.

Reed and his followers thought about the long 14 mile drive to Blue Rapids and held out for a church in their village. With the selection of a church site deadlocked Reed decided to take matters into his own hands.

He had foundation material hauled to Reedsville and then, according to legend, in the dark of night Reed and Thomas Hawkins built a foundation by lantern light, hoping to keep word from Blue Rapids until it was finished. They were certain that once a foundation was built the other side would come around. But the 14 miles looked just as far and long to the Blue Rapids

Episcopalians and they chose to remain in their town.

With the thinning of their ranks the financial commitment became greater for the Canadians, but they went ahead with their building. A little red-brick church with stained glass windows was ready for worship services in April, 1874.

Mary Jane Hawkins, second daughter of Thomas and Jane Hawkins (Irish immigrants) was the first infant baptized at Mt. Zion. Her name and date of baptism were inscribed with heavy dark pencil on one of the rafters. It was still legible many years later when the building was razed.

Reed's sons, Fred and Harry, were partners in the family business. In 1901 Reed's second wife died and he died a year later. And his village was also dying. It had outlived its usefulness. With the promise of rural mail routes from Home City and Marysville the Reedsville post office closed November 29, 1902--29 years and one day after it was established. The Reeds closed the store and moved to western Kansas.

Later the Reedsville buildings were razed and the Mt. Zion Church was dismantled brick by brick and rebuilt as a granary on the Thomas Hawkins' farm.



ST. WENCESLAUS CHURCH

by Opal Weber Skalla

Since most of the Czechs had come to America for religious freedom, two churches were organized. St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church and the Czech Presbyterian Church. For many years,

when an itinerant minister or priest happened along, worship services were held in the homes. The protestants held hymn sings and prayer services in homes for nearly twenty years before the church was organized.

St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church was organized in 1889 with a congregation of 20 Czech families from the Bohemian settlement along the Marshall-Riley County line. Mass had been celebrated a few times in the Dominic Nedved home and the people wanted a church. The Rev. P.P. Klaus of the Frankfort parish, organized the church and with the help of the people, built a frame , 30 x 18, on a 2 acre plot in the southeast corner of section 32-5-7 of Blue Rapids Township. The land for the church and adjoining cemetery was given by the Frank Forst family who had already started a family plot.

The new church was dedicated to the Bohemian saint, St. Wenceslaus. The first Mass was celebrated July 4, 1889. The people were happy despite no pews and no other furnishings. A table served as an altar. Vestments were sent later from Baltimore, Maryland, by friends of the congregation. Fr. Klaus attended the church for about five or six years, coming from Frankfort every second month. The early Catholic settlers were the Cevis, Duchek, Forst, Hnat, Karet, Kotapish, Nedved, Kratochvil, Nerad, Osner, Sladek, Smutny, Svacha, and Zeleny families.

By 1906, the congregation outgrew the small church and Fr. Kulisek, Frankfort, built a new, larger frame church, which was dedicated September 28, 1906, by Fr. Kulisek and Fr. Janecek. In August, 1909, after 20 years of service from priests of the parish, St. Wenceslaus' church became a mission of St. Monica's church, Waterville, with Mass said every two weeks by Fr. Elast. St. Ann Altar Society of the parish, and the Duckek family gave a bell to the church in 1910.

With the building of St. Elizabeth's church in Irving, the rural parish became smaller with less masses celebrated. A lot of the families had bought farms and moved farther north into Marshall County. Pastors of St. Monica's served the church until 1921, when Fr. Porelance closed the church because only four or five families were left to attend.



CZECH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

By Opal Weber Skalla

The Czech Presbyterian Church was organized September 10, 1893, at the Swede Creek Schoolhouse in Riley County with members who were Czech settlers of the community along the

Riley and Marshall County line. A site for the church was given by Frank Musil and was built in the spring of 1894 about 1/4 mile south of the county line. The church, barely finished and to be dedicated soon, burned to the ground. The student minister, William Schiller, returned to New York to help raise money to rebuild. The hardpressed settlers came up with money again for a new building, which was built in 1895 and dedicated. After another two years with the church, Mr. Schiller left for another church.

The 36 charter members were from the Musil, Moses, Soudek, Petr, Fajmon, Pishny, Hula, Sedivy, Skalla, Smerchek, Scancara, and Prochaska families.

The church was moved to a more central location six miles south of Blue Rapids in 1905. A women's organization, the Lydia Society, was organized in 1908. The young people had several classes which grew into the Live Wires in 1920. They, as well as the Lydia Society, contributed to the growth of the church and helped out financially as well.

The Rev. Joseph Miksovsky was pastor at the time the church was moved. He also had time to help organize the Czech Telephone Company at the "turn of the century." A member, Joseph Svoboda, gave the land for the church on southeast corner of 19-5-7. A deed states that \$70.00 was paid for the land.

The church had few resident pastors for many years and the pulpit was filled during the summer months by seminary students. The Rev. Joseph Leksa served the church from 1922 until 1932. During his ministry, the youth organization which culminated in the Live Wires, helped the session put a basement under the church and remodel the sanctuary in 1926. Of course, the Lydia Missionary Society, organized in 1908 for Bible study and to help out financially, also helped with this project.

The church was served by Czech-speaking ministers and students until 1934 when one English-speaking minister took on three parishes, the Blue Rapids Presbyterian Church, the Irving Presbyterian Church, and the Czech Presbyterian Church. This union continued until the late 50s, when the Irving Church was closed because of Tuttle Creek Reservoir, and merged with the Blue Rapids church becoming a two church parish.

The Czech Presbyterian Church celebrated several anniversaries, the last in 1973 to celebrate 80 years. The church closed its doors the last Sunday in December of 1973 as there were few resident members and they were financially unable to keep up the church. The church merged with the United Presbyterian Church of Blue Rapids. The building and acre were sold to Harold and Marjorie Kotapish, who own the land once owned by Svoboda. At their suggestion, a historical sign has been placed on the corner, stating: Site of the Czech Presbyterian

Church 1893-1973.

The Lydia Society of the Czech Presbyterian Church was organized October 1, 1908, at the home of Mrs. Charles (Anna) Musil and given the name Lydia Society. It later was renamed, Lydia Missionary Society. Officers elected at the first meeting were President, Mrs. Josie Musil; Secretary, Mrs. Josie Kratochvil; Treasurer, Miss Emma Skalla. Dues were set at 15 cents a month, later changing to an offering in recent years.

The following became members at the first meeting: Josie Pishny, Mary Musil, Elizabeth Hula, Anna Dobrovolny, Jennie Dobrovolny, Ann Dvorak, Julia Lamb, Anna Musil, Josie Musil, Emma Konigsmark, Winnie Musil, Josie Kratochvil, Emma Skalla, Mary Dvorak and Albina Musil. Several more members of the church joined the Lydia in 1909. Until recent years, there have been an average of 26 members, now only ten or twelve active member (in 1977).

The purpose of the society was "to be a spiritual and moral help to our Czech Presbyterian Church, and to cultivate Christian love and forbearance among ourselves." The meetings have always been held the first Thursday of each month in the home of the members or in the church basement, after the church closed, many meetings were held in the Blue Rapids Church social rooms.

The society followed the Presbyterian Women's program of

study, heard missionaries, had Bible study, besides raising money for different projects of the church. The society was truly the traditional "Ladies Aid", helping out the church session financially at various times. They gave programs, held suppers, bazaars, ice cream socials, quilted quilts, and served at local auction sales to make money to be used for the work of the church..

source: The Blue Rapids Times

HOME CITY METHODIST

by Eulalia T. Guise

English speaking citizens of the unincorporated village of Home City, met in the St. Joseph and Grand Island depot to hold religious services as there was an Evangelical Lutheran for the German families.

In 1891 the Methodists decided to build a church, one block west of Frieden's church, now US 36. First services were held on September 21, 1891.

Members of the board were Mrs. Mary L. Tate, Mrs. J.W. Thomas, Ernest Manning, William Riley and Jacob Beveridge, Sr.

During the early part of this century, an organized Sunday school, Epworth League and Ladies Aid were active. As German was spoken at Frieden's and a parochial school was conducted, some of the German families sent their children to the Methodist Sunday school as the classes were conducted in English.

As the motor age of transportation increased and the older members of the congregation died, the congregation dwindled and in 1935 the building was sold to Mrs. Grace Lennington, Beattie, who converted it into a residence.

source: Early Day History of Home City

by Richard W. Lewis

SCHROYER METHODIST CHURCH

By Eulalia T. Guise

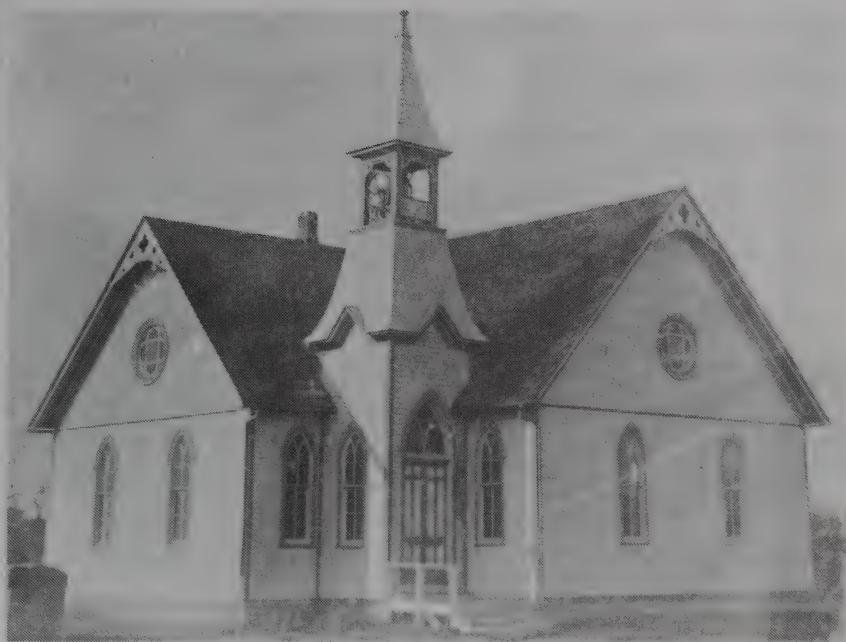
Residents of the village of Schroyer and neighborhood conducted services in the Schroyer School District No. 9 with itinerant pastors and laymen conducting the services.

A Methodist congregation was organized and a white frame constructed in 1892 at the east edge of the village.

Some of the most active members became interest in Christian Science and attended services in Marysville. The congregation decreased and in 1946 the congregation disbanded and the building moved to Garrison in 1946.

When the Blue Valley was inundated by Tuttle Creek Dam, the church disappeared.

source: Letters from Edith Hammett Mason



VLIETS METHODIST CHURCH

by Eulalia T. Guise

Similar to other denominations, first services of the Vliets Methodist were held in the school house at the south edge of town by the Reverend Merril C. Hamm. At that time there were a dozen members of the Methodist Episcopal faith.

In 1899 construction of a building began and was completed at a cost of \$2,115.00. About 1900, women organized the Vliets Aid Society. As the membership was small, some non-women and also members of other denominations worked to support the church. When the Women's Society of Christian Service was

organized, the membership was still too small, so the Aid Society became the Vliets Social Circle. But the aim was the same, which was to keep the community together.

When the church closed in 1960, the Social Circle continued its services to the community.

Another organization, the Vliets Harmony Guild, started helping the Aid Society in selling products, serving suppers, and holding fall bazaars for the upkeep, repair and support of the church..

After the church closed in 1960, the building was used for a work shop. Paul Plummer was the last minister.

source: The Marysville Advocate, 1963



METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH AT IRVING

As a thriving pioneer town, Irving supported several churches. Among them was a Methodist Episcopal Church organized in 1867 by Rev. Devaul.

In 1871 a stone building was erected, but the congregation flourished and outgrew the small building and the congregation met at the Presbyterian Church.

In 1882 a parsonage was built and two years later, a white frame building was constructed, which served until the 1930's when the congregation merged with the Presbyterian.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF IRVING

by Lois Cohorst

Little information is available concerning the Christian Church of Irving. It was known to have been organized in 1892 by Elder H.E. Ballow, and there were 92 charter members. The church has been described as a small white frame building located across the street from the Knights of Phythias Hall in Irving. Names of family members belonging to the church included Carruthers, Hollenberg, Peterson, Jones, Murphy, Fenwick, Hines, Blazier and others.

The Christian Church was one of five Irving churches; the Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Catholic, Christian and Methodist. The Christian Church was closed by the loss of membership and its walls came tumbling down in the demolition of the construction of Tuttle Creek Dam. Some congregations that were affected by the work of Tuttle Creek and the U.S. government's Army Engineers, were able to merge with like congregations in other towns, salvaging their building by sharing stain glass windows, bells, pews, and members. However, the Christian Church of Irving disappeared, not to be merged and never to be replaced, therefore, it joined the ranks of the ghost churches of Marshall County.

source: Loma Wagon's scrapbook

Guise, Eulalia and Byron, "An Affair With The Past"



RICHLAND CENTER CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

by Kate Flanagan

In the fall of 1882, several families of the German Baptist Brethren denomination, came from central Illinois and settled in Richland Township. The Rev. Enoch Eby preached the first sermon, in the Koch school house, three miles west and one mile south of the present church location.

A popular name for members of this sect was Dunkard, referring to their method of baptism by immersion, characterized by their Baptist practices, opposition to military service, the taking of legal oaths, and by their simplicity of life as distinguished by their severely plain mode of dress.

Meetings were sometimes held in the Hatten school house, one mile west and two miles south in S. 15. After Barklow school house was built and thereafter for seven years, their services were held in the school house. The semi-annual Love Feasts were held on farms of members in buildings originally intended for the storage of grain, and where there was more room. The meat of these Love Feasts was cooked in huge iron kettles over an open fire in the yard. These meetings began Friday evening, lasting through Sunday.

The church was organized October 27, 1883, with Hervey Brouhard and wife; John Rink and wife and two daughters, Mary and Nancy; Ephriam Baringer and wife; A.Z. Gates and wife; and Amos Barklow and wife as charter members; with Elder Henry Brubaker in charge. The membership soon mounted to twenty-five, and included John and Levi Eby and families, Simon Studebaker and family, William Smith and wife and others.

Land was purchased from S.W. Stedman on which to locate the church, and cemetery adjacent to the church. Angie Eby, wife of Levi Eby, was the first to be laid to rest in the cemetery.

The church was built in 1890 and dedicated July 13, 1890 by Elder J.S. Mohler, and known as Vermillion Church, taking it's name from Vermillion Creek close by.

On June 21, 1915, the name of the church was changed to Richland Center church of the Brethren and in the summer of

1917 the church was remodeled, an addition 16x30 added, and also a baptistry. The church progressed.

During the 1920's to early 1940's, the membership increased greatly. Community sports of baseball, volleyball, tennis and many other activities were participated in by young and old on the church grounds and nearby field and homes. Many young members served their country during World War II. One young member, First Lieutenant Robert O. Bergmann who enlisted in the Air Corps during World War II, gave his life in the Korean conflict, October 19, 1951. Robert was the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Bergmann of this community and husband of the former Peggy Hadorn and father of Ronald and Barbara Bergmann. He was laid to rest in the Salem Lutheran cemetery November 14, 1951.

In these times of larger farms and fewer rural people, when membership in many rural churches has dwindled or discontinued altogether, this church still maintains a membership of 42 families, resident and non-resident. Services conducted by the Rev. Harold Jensen of the United Presbyterian church, Summerfield, and Sunday school classes were held each Sunday. An active Ladies' Aid met during the week preparing for their annual bazaar held each year in October, consisting of a bountiful home cooked meal and auction of beautiful handmade quilts and other articles.

These sincere, peace-loving people, as well as others who

were not members of this church, lived up to their convictions in church and civic affairs, their word was as good as their bond, their family life as perfect as they were able to make it. A good example was set for their children and the influence of these early settlers is still felt in this community.

source: Marshall County Historical Society tour in 1972

RICHLAND CENTER CHURCH CONTINUED

by: Oretha Ruetti

The auctioneer cried, "Sold". Another rural church, one of a dying breed, was gone.

The congregation of the 104 year old Richland Center Church of the Brethren had just sold their house of worship to the highest bidder on April 15. For the past 97 years this church has been standing on a corner in the middle of Richland Township, six miles southwest of Summerfield.

John Miller, Mount Vernon, Mo. who bought the building is dismantling it board by board. While he and his wife and their helper, Greg Knowles, pry boards and pull nails, the American and Christian flags still on their staffs watch over stack of wainscoting boards and boxes of hymnals left for souvenirs.

Miller has more than just a passing interest in the church. "This

was the nursery where I played in the sandbox," he said pointing into a small room to the left of the pulpit platform.

His mother, Mrs. Alta Miller, 91, Beattie, was the oldest of the few remaining members when the church closed on October 26, 1986, with a farewell basket dinner. She and her husband, the late Harry Miller, and their children were longtime faithful members of this church.

The Brethren were of the Dunkard sect that opposed military duty and legal oaths, baptized by immersion and adopted a severely plain dress code.

"Yes, the women used to always wear long-sleeved dresses," said Mrs. Miller, "but as time went by they changed from a lot of their earlier ways."

"But I remember when the older women still wore their little white net skull caps to church." said Iola Knowles, Mrs. Miller's daughter.

The church was founded by Brethren settlers who came from Illinois in 1882. A sermon was preached in the Koch school house in the spring of 1883; six months later the Vermillion Church of the Brethren was organized on Oct. 27, 1883, at the Smith School.

Their choice of the name came from their location in the vicinity of the headwaters of the west branch of the Vermillion River. It was changed in 1915 to Richland Center.

Charter members were the families of Henry Brouhard, John Rick, Ephriam Baringer and A.Z. Gates. They were soon joined by the Amos Barklow, John and Levi Eby, William Smith and Simon Studebaker families. Their first ministers were N.F. Brubaker and L.H. Eby.

For the next seven years they met in schoolhouses of the Fairview and Hatten districts, the Totten home east of Mina and then at the Barklow School until a 30x40 foot church was built in 1890 on land purchased from Samuel Stedman.

A cemetery was laid out adjacent to the church with 30 year old Angie Eby and infant son the first burials in 1891. Twelve veterans from three wars are buried in this cemetery founded by peace-loving Brethrens.

The first unpaid ministers were farmers eking out a living from the land while tending to their ministerial duties. It was not until 1915 that the minister received partial payment for his support from the congregation.

Before the church was built the Love Feast (communion) was conducted at members' farms beginning on Friday evening and lasting through Sunday. Meat for the meals was cooked in a large iron kettle over an open fire in the yard.

When H.R. Tice, Summerfield veterinarian, wrote the church history in 1933, he found in 1885 records that the almanac was consulted for Communion dates, always at night, to coincide with

a full moon. Older folks wanted plenty of moonlight to travel by.

Their own church was not paid for but the congregation solicited money to help build a Brethren Church in Washington, Kan., in 1894 and gave \$12 to "Western relief."

A room with a basement below was added to the west side of the church in 1917 and a baptistry and furnace installed. The baptistry was removed in 1930 and the basement extended under the entire building.

"When the baptistery was taken out they bought a stock tank for baptisms." Iola said. "We bought the tank I was baptized in at the auction last week."

The ever-growing membership of the Brethren served both the spiritual and temporal needs of the community.

"Oh, we used to do so many things," Mrs. Miller recalled. "Mother and daughter and father and son banquets, oyster suppers, ice cream socials and there was a net in the church yard for games."

Iola noted that they played tennis and volleyball and the men had a softball team.

In time the basement got a fully equipped kitchen where the Ladies Aid could serve the annual autumn bazaar supper and sell handmade quilts and embroidered and crocheted linens. This popular event drew large crowds from all corners of the county.

After World War II the trend for larger farms and smaller

families began taking its toll on the church membership. In April, 1956 the Brethren began sharing a minister with Summerfield's United Presbyterian Church. The parsonage, one-half mile west of the church, was sold in 1964. It is now owned by Bill Sejkora.

Mrs. Miller said they had to give up their Sunday school and she thought it was 1981 or '82 when the Ladies Aid had its last bazaar supper.

"We just didn't have the members to carry on." Iola said as she counted remaining families on one hand - Miller, Knowles, Rundle, Conable and Bernasek. The Rev. John Evans was the minister when the church closed.

The church pews, pulpit furniture, a brass cross and candlesticks were sent to Tokahookaadi, a Navaho Indian congregation at Lynbrook, N.M. The pews had come from the North Elm Christian Church when it closed several years ago.

Iola said a North Elm man who had helped haul the pews to Richland Center in a wagon of straw was at the auction and happy to know they had gone to the Navahos.

The corner will become a parking lot for the cemetery. Some thought is being given to erecting a monument to tell future generations that here once was the Richland Center Church of the Brethren, loved and nurtured until its numbers were no more.

source: The Marysville Advocate



SWEDISH LUTHERAN CHURCH AT COTTAGE HILL

by Eulalia T. Guise

With the dismantling underway of the Gloria Dei Swedish

Lutheran Church established on September 27, 1871, the last of the three churches which marked Cottage Hill, closed another chapter of rural church life.

Marshall county noted for its strong rural churches in a horse and buggy era is fast losing the country churches which dominated the rural scene. Every community of a predominant nationality had its own established church.

Three were located in Cottage Hill. The English Lutheran, long closed, located east of Cottage Hill school the center of the village was remodeled into a residence in which Sander Larson resided. A second church , a Methodist, erected in 1884, stood on the west side of the road, now U.S. 77 and site of the Swedish Lutheran was north of the school on the east side. Also marking the settlement was a store, blacksmith shop, several residences and the parsonage for the ministers serving the Swedish church. Miss Minnie Larson, Marshall County Register of Deeds resided in the parsonage from 1930 until she moved to Marysville when elected to her position.

With the dwindling of the membership of the congregation from an all time high in 1912 with 120 members until its forced closing in 1950 when only nine members remained in the community, decision was made to sell the property.

In October, 1950, the church building was sold to Dr. Carl A. Swanson of Salem Lutheran Church. The parsonage and five

acres of land, barn and other buildings were sold to Sander Larson.

Members of the church whose sentimental ties of christening, confirmations, weddings and funerals were bound to the Gloria Dei Church transferred membership to the Waterville Lutheran church. However a familiar scene in the Waterville church is the beautiful altar painting of Christ on the Mt. of Olive presented by Mr. and Mrs. C.E. Johnson as a memorial to their son, Paul Harold which was moved from the Gloria Dei church to its present home.

A complete history of the church dating from 1871 to 1931, when the sixtieth anniversary was observed, was written by Minnie Larson, a member of the church. The facts compiled by Miss Larson and added commentary has been preserved in a printed pamphlet, entitled, "History of the Cottage Hill Lutheran Church," by Herbert and Jennie Youngbloom.

Quoting Miss Larson's history who interviewed G.F. Nelson, only remaining charter member, for the facts, she said:

"A great majority of those that took their homesteads south and west of Waterville were Swedes, coming directly from Sweden or from Eastern states. Some came as early as 1853 to 1870. It took men and women of character and with strong faith in God who gave them courage and endurance to help make Kansas, and the community in which we live what it is.

"After having been here but a short time these men and women with religious training in their homes, and schools of Sweden, found it necessary to remain steadfast to their teaching. Many of the early settlers would go to Mariadahl to service and would also take communion there. It was a great distance in early days. But having a desire to hear the word of God, distance was not measured by miles.

"Services were held in the various homes or at a school house whenever a minister could be supplied. The homesteader's home, although it contained but one or two rooms was never too small to meet and to hear the gospel preached for prayer service.

"September 28, 1871, the Swedish people of this community assembled at the Harbaugh school house. It being the first school house in the township, with pastor Lindahl of Mariadahl as chairman and S. Sjoblom as acting secretary."

With a list of 75 confirmed charter members, the constitution was drawn and officers elected and the following year the congregation sent a delegate to the Augustana Synod at Galesburg, Ill., and united with that Synod.

Early pastors received a salary of \$100 a year, with each family contributing \$8. One of the pastors lived in Waterville and members took turns transporting him to the church service held either in the Harbaugh or Pleasant Hill school house.

By 1877 the growing congregation decided to build a church

and the central part of Cottage Hill township was chosen and in 1883 the land purchased. The next step was to appoint a building committee which consisted of Henry Nelson, N.P. Nelson, Daniel Moden and C.J. Nelson.

After the acceptance of the plans of the committee, hauling of stone, sand and mason work of the foundation was built by donated labor. The church, a frame building built by Henry Nelson, a carpenter and member of the congregation was completed in 1887, at a cost of \$1,552.00.

Pastor during the building of the church was the Rev. L.A. Edman. Other additions to the church property were a parsonage erected in 1894 and in 1898 one acre of land was purchased for a cemetery. By 1911 the church was remodeled and painted.

Modernity touched the church in 1923 when it was decided to hold Swedish services the first Sunday and English services the third Sunday, alternating with Brantford congregation and the free pledge system was adopted.

At the time of the sixtieth anniversary, Miss Larson noted that the congregation consisted of 36 confirmed members and 12 children with one Swedish service given each month.

Sunday school superintendent at that time was P.O. Hawkinson, who also taught the Bible class, Geneva Larson was teacher of the children's class and Miss Malenda Moden was

organist.

After being known as the Gloria Dei Evangelical Lutheran church of Waterville, Kansas, for 70 years, the name was changed in 1941 to Cottage Hill Evangelical Lutheran church by the conference.

Many ministers have served the church and at the time of the closing in 1950, the Rev. Virgil Lindquist, Leonardville was vice pastor. Also serving the church were the organists, secretaries, deacons and trustees who faithfully carried the work for 80 years.

Names of the church officers who had served the at the time of its sixtieth anniversary observance as recorded by Miss Larson were: Deacons, N.P. Nelson, P. Holt, P. Bloomquist, Olaf Johnson, E. Larson, A.F. Johnson, C.O. Nelson, A.W. Hager, N.A. Holm, J.A. Olson, H. Nelson, J.M. Moden, J.A. Lindquist, Valdemer Johnson, Frank Anderson, C.V. Peterson, Frank Moden, Victor Nelson, Carl Larson and C.E. Johnson.

Trustees were Henry Nelson, J.A. Olson, J.E. Nelson, John Swanson, Chas. Freegren, John Erickson, G.F. Nelson, C. Johnson, N.P. Anderson, C.F. Nelson, D. Moden, C.O. Nelson, J.P. Peterson, C.A. Nelson, C.J. Johnston, C.N. Nofrn, C.A. Peterson, Emil Swanson, Oscar Nelson, L.J. Larson, John Hager, Ed Nelson, Frank Moden, C.H. Lindquist, A.D. Moden, Victor Nelson, Alma Larson, Ed Johnston, Arthur Larson, Carl Larson, Albin Lindquist.

Secretaries: August Nelson, first year; N.P. Anderson five years; J.A. Olson, two years, L.J. Lawson, 11 years; C.A. Nelson one year; P.O. Hawkinson, four years; Oscar Nelson, 24 years and Miss Larson, five years.

source: The Marysville Advocate, 1951



THE METHODIST CHURCH OF THOMAS (LATER COTTAGE HILL)

by Eulalia T. Guise

Church services for the Cottage Hill community were held in

the schoolhouse after it was completed in 1872. A Methodist church was organized in 1874 and services continued to be held in the schoolhouse until the building of a church in 1884.

There was a need for living quarters for the ministers and a parsonage was built in 1878 on land donated by Jackson Thomas near the southeast corner of his quarter. The church was built later beside the parsonage. There was a strong Sunday school, Epworth League and Junior League and weekly prayer services. The Women's Missionary Society and Aid Society were also strong.

The church was served by local pastors for thirty-three years. In 1892 a circuit was instituted by the Kansas Conference of three charges, Cottage Hill, Randolph and Fancy Creek. The minister continued to live in Cottage Hill until Randolph built a personage in 1907. A few years later Randolph became a station and another circuit was formed of three country charges but they were not strong enough to support a pastor. Cottage Hill continued to have Sunday school for a time and then closed until 1920 when the Waterville pastor started holding services again. In early 1925, the membership was transferred to the Waterville church where many of the earlier members had already found a church home upon retirement.

The English Lutherans began holding service in the Pleasant Hill schoolhouse in the early 1870's alternating with the Swedes

Lutherans. A church was organized in 1878 in the Pleasant Hill schoolhouse. In 1883 the pastor began to hold alternate services in the Keystone schoolhouse to accommodate the members in that community. Later the two communities were brought together at a central point in Cottage Hill and the erection of a church just east of the schoolhouse was completed and dedicated by Rev. I.B. Heisey in 1891. Services were held in the church by Waterville pastors until 1926 when services were held on alternate Sundays in the Swede Lutheran Church. In 1929 services were discontinued and the Cottage Hill property was sold to Sander Larson and moved a mile north and transformed into a home. The membership of both the English and Swede Lutheran churches was eventually transferred to the Waterville church.

source: The Waterville Telegraph

THE GERMAN LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THOMAS

The German settlers joined the German homesteaders to the south across the country line into Riley County. From 1864 to

1869 the area was served by circuit riders who held services in various homes. In 1869 a class was formally organized and services were held in the Swede Creek schoolhouse until a church was erected in 1876. The present church building was built in 1917.

A Sunday school was organized in 1871 and various other auxiliaries such as the Women's Missionary Society and Young People alliance have been active through the years.

Four sons and daughters of the church have given their lives to full time Christian service: two ministers, Rev. Ed Dahm and Rev. Leslie Toburen; a minister's wife, Alice Weber Heitke; and Hazelle Richter, a teacher at Red Bird Mission in Kentucky.

Now that the temporal religious and educational needs of the homesteaders in their communities have been covered we will turn back in time to the autumn of 1874 when the faith and courage of the homesteaders was severely tested.

The summer season in 1874 had been good and there was promise of an abundant crop. Coming out of their homes on an early morning in late August the homesteaders observed a darkness along the horizon and as it rose higher and darker, it was thought to be a rain cloud. Soon drops began to fall but they were not raindrops. They were grasshoppers. The vast hordes of hoppers became thicker and thicker until they obscured the sun. They lit in the corn fields completely ridding them in a few

short hours. Gardens and orchards went the way of the cornfields, even the hoe and fork handles were riddled and as the hoppers left all that remained of the turnips was a hole in the ground.

The homesteaders held a prayer meeting praying for relief from the terrible disaster, fearing that the hoppers might return. One homesteader arrived a little late for the meeting and as he came in he announced to the company, "There's no use praying, I looked in the hedge rows on my way here and they are full of eggs so we might as well go home." However, the prayers may have helped for the next summer when the hoppers emerged a scourge broke out among the hoppers and they perished.

source: The Waterville Telegraph



DANISH-ENGLISH LUTHERAN

by Eulalia T. Guise

The church bell in the steeple on the small painted frame building known as the English Lutheran church of Walnut township has been stilled.

No longer will it toll the call of worship for Sunday services but the clapper will be as mute as the peaceful cemetery which adjoins the edifice.

Ending an 80 year religious era for the community was the final service preached on Sunday, March 6, 1951, by the Rev. Martin Ashley, Waterville pastor, who had served the charge since 1949.

Located six miles west and two miles south of Marysville, midway to Waterville, the belfry and spire of the tiny is visible for miles.

During pioneer days it served as a beacon of light to parishioners, who worshipped there on Sunday afternoons after a week of hard toil and privation, filled with hunger for the word of God.

Identified with the early Scandinavians who settled in Walnut Township, it was constructed primarily for the Danes, Swedes, and some Norwegians, who lived in the vicinity. From early days it was known and referred to as the Danish church , although the name was officially changed to English Evangelical Lutheran church when reorganized in 1898.

Prior to the construction of the church building, mission ministers from the Axtell vicinity held services at interims in homes of Swedish families.

Finally Nelson Peterson prepared a room over his corn-crib

where the Swedes met for religious services, it was recalled by Reuben Levine, whose father, Sven Levine, homesteaded the present Levine home in 1869.

The records gleaned from a thick brown book, its leaves yellowed with age, and faded ink-written Danish script, now the possession of Miss Cecilia Hanke, secretary-treasurer of the present council a list of names was procured as of the date March 25, 1874.

It is believed the names are members of the Skandinaviske Evangeliske Lutherske community of Marshall county, who formed a congregation and were served by Danish itinerant ministers.

Many of the names are now inscribed on the tombstones in the quiet peaceful cemetery, shaded by pine trees as old as the burial ground.

They were J.P. Lund, Johanne Magadalene Lund, Peter Lund, Martin Lund, Helene Lund, Johan Hansen, Merredt Hansen, Maren Johansen, Jans Johansen, Niels Skott, Martin Skott, Dorthea Skott, Anne Skott, Maria Skott, Martha Nielsen, Niels Christiansen, Niels White, Anton Peterson, Peter Peterson, Betsy Peterson, John Peterson, Elly Peterson, Christen Jorgenson, Peter L. Lundgren, Tirga Lunddren and Nora Nelson.

According to the history of Marshall county by Emma Forter, Jens T. Lund, H.M. Johnson and P.S. Lundgrien as trustees and

Martin Scott as secretary were the first church council and N.C. Brun of Doniphan County was the first pastor.

In a desire for a permanent church home, a small Scandinavian group solicited funds for the building and contributions ranged from 25 cents to \$20 which were the gifts of Protestants and Catholic alike.

The yellowed list with names inscribed in fading ink, a possession of Reuben Levine, is a record of name and amounts many of them prominent in Marysville business life in the 1870s.

Among the contributors were the Perry Hutchinson family, Arand and Ziegler, Schmidt and Koester, John Tracy and Co., Hohn and Draheim, Dr. W.F. Boyakin, Napoleon Carden, Joseph Ellenbecker, H.M. Bull, A.B. Campbell, A.G. Barrett, H.P. Wells and several of the Farrell families.

Subscribers to the church fund were listed in a letter dated November, 1879, and written as an explanation by the first pastor, the Rev. H.C. Ruennears.

Approximately \$500 was raised for the building which was constructed by Matt Trienen, assisted by Niels Madison and other carpenters, with much of the labor donated.

A Danish carpenter, whose name has been forgotten, stayed at the Sven Levine home and constructed the hand-carved altar, Miss Nora Levine recalled. Farm women of the community aided in the construction work by boarding the carpenters and

providing good meals.

Before the church was built, a cemetery had been started, and according to records the first death among members of the congregation was that of Peter White in 1879. However, early settlers say that the Germans owned part of the burial ground and a tombstone bears the name and date of Henry Stegelen, 1877.

First wedding solemnized in the church was the ceremony uniting Peter Christianson and Christina Anderson. The latter was a sister of Mrs. Mary Bertelson of Waterville.

A treasure of Mrs. Howard Vail was the original charter granted by the secretary of state dated November 18, 1879. Her father Hans Braasted, a charter member was a member of the first church board. Other names on the charter are J.P. Lund, N.A. White, N.P. Christianson, Chas Johnson, C.A. Holst and Peter Lundgren.

An amendment to the original charter issued on May 22, 1903 by the secretary of state transferred ownership to the English Lutheran church.

Danish ministers, usually sent to serve the church, held services every two weeks on Sunday afternoon.

So urgent was the need for worship, that members of the younger generation walked four and five miles to attend his afternoon service.

Strongly identified with the church in memory of the present membership was the Rev. Heisey, and those who followed his teachings referred to themselves as "Heisey Lutherans."

Described as a gentle shepherd who led his flock with righteousness and kindness the beloved pastor lived the Christian life that he preached.

Driving a two-wheel cart from Waterville, he ministered among his rural flock, never disclosing discouragement when his stipend failed to cover expenses and his wife abetted his salary with her excellent sewing talent.

Charter members of the reorganized church as the English Lutheran church were Geroge Eddy, Susan Eddy, Peter and Albert Larson, Albert and Laura Peterson, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Scott, Lucy and Clara, Peter Anderson, Adolph Giffert, Minnie Johnson, Gertrude and Della Behm, Nora, Emma and Marie Levine, Hans and Henry Hanson, Peter and Anna Peterson , Lena and Clara Blaser, John Blaser, Otto Giffert, Andrew Peterson, Louis and Marie Nelson.

Members of the last church Council were John H. Vail, president; Cecilia Hanke, secretary-treasurer; Elvin Drever, O.W. Dam and Reuben Levine.

The Rev. Heisey served the church until 1912, during his pastorate at St. Mark's church in Waterville. Since that time St. Mark's pastors have served the English Lutheran church and they

were C.J. Herster, 1912-1915; C. Powell, 1917-1919; A.F. Crouse 1919-1923; C.J. Ferster, 1923-1925; Rev. Heisey, 1925-1938; George Search, 1938-1944; Wilfred Henning, 1944-1949; Martin Ashley, 1949-1955.

While the surrounding countryside has taken on a new look, the peaceful small church is changeless, the same bare floors, sealed walls and ceiling and wainscoting, constructed by the builders, three quarters of a century ago remain as in the beginning.

Only touch of modernity is the furnace which heats the building and the REA wires which provides electricity to the carriage lights flanking the doorway.

Seven pews on either side of the frame structure, 24x36 feet in dimension attest to the small congregation it served so faithfully through the long years.

source: The Marysville Advocate, 1951



ST. ELIZABETH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

by Opal Weber Skalla

St. Elizabeth's Catholic Church was built in 1913 to provide for the people of St. Wenceslaus parish which had voted to disband, and for the Catholics in the Springside community southeast of Irving. Four lots for the church were donated, two by James

Denton, and two by a Mrs. DeForest. The church, a 36 by 75 foot frame structure, was built in 1913, and was dedicated on June 5 of that year by Bishop Ward, assisted by 15 priests. The church was named for Herman Feigner's mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Feigner, the largest donor to the new church.

At a meeting at the John Forst home, it was decided to adopt the plan of St. Monica's church at Waterville with some modifications. Committee appointed in charge of the building was Herman Fiegener, John Forst and Matt Wacek. In the autumn of 1912 members hauled sand from the Blue River and dug the basement and built the foundation of the new church.

In the meantime Father Michael O'Leary had been appointed pastor of Waterville and took charge of building the church.

Gertrude Forst Protiva was the first organist in the new church. Mrs. Kate Bornhorst served as church organist for more than forty years.

The church building was moved to Blue Rapids from Irving because of Tuttle Creek Reservoir. Relocated on the south end of East Avenue on a basement that included a kitchen and large social room. Rededication was June 25, 1961.

Some of the first families of the parish were Duchek, Forst, Hnat, Kotapish, Osner, Zeleny, Smutny and Zidek, from St. Wenceslaus parish; Wacek, Vesely, Budenbender, Tenopir, Gunther, Nesvaal, and Feigner from the Springside community.



IRVING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

by Eulalia T. Guise

Remove not the ancient landmarks, which thy fathers have set.

Proverbs 22:28.

An island of tranquility in a troubled world is the Irving Presbyterian church which will soon become a deserted church yard.

Another victim of Tuttle Creek dam, the stone church which has withstood the vicissitudes of pioneer days, a cyclone, depression and inflation, will lose its identity.

By a vote of the congregation the Irving church merged with the Blue Rapids church as it approaches the centennial anniversary of it founding.

Distinguished as the oldest Presbyterian church in the Blue Valley, the congregation was organized shortly after Kansas became a state.

If rising waters of the Tuttle Creek dam reservoir have not found their level by 1962, the stone edifice may survive until its centennial.

The congregation voted to merge with the Blue Rapids church but intends to keep the church doors open until waters reach the stone walls which stand as solid and staunch as when erected in 1880.

Dating back to Territorial and Civil War days, the Irving congregation was founded October 23, 1862, when a group of nine men and women banded together to organize the First Presbyterian Church of Irving.

Blind Charles Parker, a zealous and earnest home missionary cared for the sick in soddies on the prairie, performed marriage ceremonies in new cottonwood frame dwellings, laid away the dead in isolated cemeteries platted in the sod and filled the pulpit

on the Sabbath Day.

Nine charter members of the founding fathers were Mr. and Mrs. C.A. Freeland, Mr. and Mrs. Cyrus E. Gaylord, Mrs. J.L. Freeland, Mrs. W.W. Jerome, A. Goer and the Rev. Parker and his wife, Mrs. Amanda Parker.

First place of worship was in a frame dwelling, constructed of native lumber which was erected in 1863 in block 38 of Irving.

At the same time the Rev. Parker assisted in the promotion of the Wetmore Institute, an educational institution where young men and women were taught in the higher branches of learning.

A large three-story stone building, it was erected west of Irving and partially destroyed in the cyclone which wrecked havoc in the southern part of Marshall county, May 30, 1879.

The frame building was replaced by a stone building 1870 located at the present site by Dave Dillingham and which cost about \$3,000.

Nine years later on Friday evening, May 30, four young ladies were at the church making preparation for a strawberry festival that evening, "cloudy pillars resembling smoke later assuming an inky blackness, engaged in furious battle," according to old newspaper files.

Mrs. Fred R. Cottrell, 1408 Jenkins St., who recalled hearing the story from members of her family said that her sister, Mrs. Adelaide Smith Glassmire, the two Misses Bovey and Miss

Elizabeth Patterson were in the church when the first cyclone struck.

Miss Patterson left the church building and started home when the second destructive cloud appeared and saved her life by laying down in a ditch.

The other three women were spared from death as they rushed into the hall to hold the door against the wind. As the storm crushed the stones of the sanctuary, the three young women sought refuge in the hall, where the belfry remained standing after the wind spent its fury, according to Mrs. Cottrell.

Blackest Sabbath in the long history of the church followed the cyclone two days later as the pastor, the Rev. J.A. Griffis, assisted in the burial of 12 persons who lost their lives in the storm.

The church was rebuilt on the same site incorporating the historic bell and belfry of 1870 vintage which withstood the cyclone. The present building was completed in 1882 at a cost of approximately \$3,500.

"The bell was sent as a gift by a church in New York state and has pealed forth its message through all the years, its rich, mellow tones lingering long in the memory of many who are near and others far removed from Irving and vicinity. Inscribed on the bell are the words: The First Presbyterian Church, Irving, Kansas, A.D. 1870. We believe that the bell first hung in the first

stone church and after the cyclone was rehung in the present building" is a quotation from a history of the church prepared by Mrs. Cottrell and read at the seventieth anniversary of the church, October 23, 1932.

Windows of the church were given by different members and friends with name of each donor inscribed on one of the diamond shaped panes. These panes were either lost or destroyed when windows were repaired according to Mrs. Cottrell's history. Only six names were recalled: Mrs. Bessie Thomson Moxley, Mrs. W.W. Jerome, Mrs. Adelaide Smith Glassmire, Mrs. Giles, Mrs. Chas. Montgomery and Mrs. A.W. Arnott.

Most of the trees shading the church were planted by Joseph Silveria, father of Mrs. St. Clair Guthrie, Sr., and stand as living memorials to his memory.

Although most of the early records were lost in the fire which destroyed the Moore and Guthrie Hardware store, names of the early pastors recalled by Mrs. Cottrell were: Rev. J.L. Chapman, Rev. G.F. Chapen, Rev. T.R. Brown, Rev. J. Wilson, Rev. I.B. Smith, Rev. J.A. Griffis, Rev. W.A. Hough, Rev. Boyd and Rev. Tightsworth. Pastors who served the church from 1886 to 1932 were Rev. W. Weiman, Salem Moyer, and H.J. Hickman (student pastors), Rev. Howell, Rev. Frank Dametz, Rev. Robert Tweed, Rev. M.L. Laybourne, Rev. W. L. Beaumont, Rev. H.B. Clerk, Rev. W.W. Carnine, Rev. L.T. Hughes, Rev. C.B. Leeper and

Rev. M.D. Berg. The latter was pastor in 1932. After that date the Irving, Blue Rapids, and Czech churches were served by the same pastor.

One member of the congregation, Miss Ellen T. Stiles, who joined the church in 1902, became a full time missionary in 1924 and began her work at the Chinese mission in San Francisco. Later she was transferred to the Rosamond B. Goodard Community Center at Northfolk, Calif., and is now deceased.

Many of the names of the congregation were fourth generation family members, who have served the church in many capacities as officers of the church and Sunday school.

One of the oldest organizations of the church was the Christian Endeavor society organized in September 1893. Charter members were Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Moore, Miss Grace Thomson, Miss Florence McMillian, Miss Augusta Carlson, Mrs. Mary E. Moore, Miss Eliza Guthrie, and Miss Florence Smith.

Two women's groups which have been active in the church were the Missionary society organized by Mrs. Axtell, mother of Dr. Myron W. Axtell, in 1901.

Formed as a Sunday school class was the Modern Marthas at the home of Mrs. Frank Thomson, October 27, 1930, when members met to make plans for organizing a group to aid in the spiritual and social life of the church and help assume financial needs.

Since 1942 or 1943, the Modern Marthas and the Women's Missionary society were united into one group, with a part of the program devoted to information on national and home missionaries.

A basement room was added to the church in 1941 when the Methodist congregation disbanded and gave their building to the Presbyterian church. With the addition of many gifts of cash by members and friends of the church, the basement was completed and dedicated, led by Rev. E.L. Brown.

Rev. S. Walton Roth, Topeka, executive secretary of the Synod of Kansas, assisted by Rev. Frank Funk, Marysville, moderator of Highland Presbytery and Rev. L. A. Tompson, Frankfort, assisted Rev. Brown in the dedicatory rites November 2, 1941.

Another dedicatory service was held November 25, 1944, with the Rev. C.M. Mills, church pastor, officiating when communion furniture was presented as memorials. Two communion chairs were given by Mrs. Katherine Peterson in memory of her husband, Carl E. Peterson and by Mrs. Cottrell, in memory of her mother, Mrs. Loretta L. Smith. Communion table was given in memory of Mr. and Mrs. W.S. Webb by Chas. Webb and Mrs. Eva Thomson, and the communion cup holder by Rev. and Mrs. Mills.

Church services have been held each Sunday through the

years as in the beginning and even as the low rumbles of the turmoil of Tuttle Creek dam issue began, members looked to the future with faith.

As displaced members of the congregation seek new church homes, the quiet solitude of the deserted churchyard in Irving will be as a sermon without words. The sigh of the winds in the stately evergreens is as a muted organ and the twittering birds in the branches harmonize as an anthem.

Yet there are those among the faithful congregation who have staunch hopes in the Biblical words: Remove not the ancient landmarks, which thy fathers have set. Proverbs 22:28

source: An Affair With The Past

The Marysville Advocate, 1959



BIGELOW METHODIST

by Eulalia T. Guise

"Take my will and make it thine

It shall be no longer mine

Take my heart it is thine own

It shall be Thy royal throne."

As the last words of the familiar hymn echoed in the grey stone walls of the nearly 70-year old Methodist church at Bigelow, Sunday worshippers shared together the humility of obeisance to an inevitable ultimatum.

It was the final worship service in the church.

Measure of adaptability of gray-haired members, who have known no other church home in their lifetime, is bending their

will to the inundation of Tuttle Creek dam reservoir which necessitated the sale of the building to the U.S. Government.

Already Sunday school had been disbanded a year ago because of lack of children as the uncertainty of the future drew nearer.

Prophetic words of the Rev. T.S. Rudisill, Methodist pastor of Blue Rapids, guest speaker, for the afternoon Homecoming "in gentleness and confidence, we shall meet our strength" gave comfort to the steadfast congregation now to be scattered to other church homes.

Approximately 150 persons including former members and guests assembled in the hard-won building, strongly constructed to withstand weather and age, for a Homecoming Sunday afternoon.

Rev. W.E. VanPatten, Frankfort, who has served the Bigelow church jointly with the Frankfort church, used as his sermon text, "Power and Peace" at Sunday morning worship services.

Befitting a homecoming, baskets of cut flowers decorated the sanctuary of the high-ceiling edifice.

Mrs. Billy Tebbutt presided for the Homecoming program following a basket dinner at noon in the church basement. Opening the program, Marilyn Williams, Topeka, sang a solo and the Rev. VanPatten gave remarks.

Mrs. Ewald Sedivy read the history of the church compiled

and written by Mrs. Chas. Walls relating important facts in the founding of the and highlights of the years.

In the late '80's the stone quarries in and near Bigelow were producing stone of exceptionally fine building quality and this industry was doing an extensive shipping business sending carloads of stone as far away as Atchison, Leavenworth and Kansas City for building purposes.

This brought quite a number of families to Bigelow to work. Among these families were several who had been Methodists where they had previously lived and were desirous of keeping that affiliation.

There being no Methodist church here a request was brought before the conference and in 1887 Rev. D.H. Walker was sent to Bigelow in response to organize a Sunday school and conduct services. These services were held in the schoolhouse for several years.

In the meantime plans were being made and funds solicited to begin the building of a church.

A Mrs. Luella Wells who lived in Vermont whose daughter had passed away gave a sum of money to the Methodist Conference building fund to be used in the building of new churches.

From this fund a gift of \$250 was received and \$250 as a loan. The Bigelow church was to be a memorial to the deceased daughter, Ella Louise Wells.

By June 1894, \$1,303.75 had been raised and a site was purchased in the east part of town and the corner-stone laid with proper ceremonies.

During the following winter and early spring the stone work was completed.

E.M. Walters was the head mason and F.M.Churchill in charge of the carpenter work. The lumber was brought from Irving by team and wagon, the stone from the local quarries.

The amount of money raised however was not sufficient to do all that had to be done so Mr. and Mrs. T.W. Mead and Mr. and Mrs. George Walls started another fund raising campaign. Among the names of donors listed many of them were from Frankfort, also Irving people. Enough was soon raised.

In special recognition, Miss Sara Yates, 90, eldest member of the congregation and Julia Ann Wullsleger, seven week old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Wullsleger, youngest person present, were presented gifts by Mrs. Cerry Williams.

Also recognized were members present at both the first worship services in 1896 and the final ceremonies Sunday. They were Miss Yates, Mrs. Ida Risdon, 73, who attended as a child with her parents; Mr. and Mrs. John Shubkagel, and Charles Walls, Irving, whose parents were also among the founders.

Gifts were presented to couples present who were married in the church. They were Mr. and Mrs. James Feldhausen, Irving;

Mr. and Mrs. Earl Durden, Topeka, and Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Wullschleger, Bigelow.

Cognizant of his long term of service as first Sunday school superintendent, Will Johnson, was honored. He served as superintendent 28 years and "started Sunday school in a corner of the church, and all I knew I learned from Sarah," (Miss Yates), he said.

Letters of greetings and reminiscences were read by Mrs. Tebbutt from former pastors and members unable to attend. Six living pastors who served the church to whom Mrs. Tebbutt paid tribute were the Rev. Otis Bussart, Edgerton; Rev. C.W. Broadfoot, Hiawatha; Rev. Robert Williams, Eureka; Rev. Harold Cunard, Gridley and Rev. Leslie Templin, Baldwin.

Owen R. Jones, Frankfort, lay leader in charge, extended an invitation to the Bigelow congregation to share the Methodist church home in Frankfort.

Music was provided by two quartettes composed of Barton, Sarah, Jane and Kathy, children of Mr. and Mrs. Fritz Carey, Manhattan, former residents, and a men's quartette, Cerry and Gwilym Williams, Wm. Griffis and James Feldhausen, who sang, "He Lives on High" and "Old Rugged Cross."

Guests were present from Marysville, Blue Rapids, Frankfort, Manhattan, Irving, Topeka and Haddam.

Members of the Women Society of Christian Service added the

final touch to the service in serving tea to the crowd in the church basement.

source: The Marysville Advocate, 1959



MOUND CHAPEL CHURCH

by Vera Brooks

Slender willows and branching elms lined the plot. Wild flowers dotted the green grass. There, miles distant from village or town, stood the little country church, Mound Chapel.

The church itself was a simple wood structure painted snowy white. The tall steeple tapered to the cross at its top. Windows, true to church tradition were brightly stained glass. The sound

of the church bell's ringing on a Sabbath morn, as it summoned families from the countryside to worship, will echo sweetly in my memory for as long as I shall live.

Fresh morning air was the only air-conditioning we knew and the black, pot-bellied, iron stove furnished heat against the icy blast of those winters.

Rites and customs of religion were observed within the sanctuary but the church was the gathering place for activities of the community. Several denominations were represented at each service.

Basket dinners were enjoyed at intervals after the morning's worship. Good food and time spent visiting promoted friendliness.

Babies were born and baptized, many grew up and were wed there. When life's span had ended, the adjoining cemetery became their final resting place. And so it was--in time of joy or sorrow, each looked to the small white church as a personal pillar of strength.

The hymns were sung with a rolling volume that made up for lack of perfect tone. One woman became very inspired when she sang and soulfully rolled her eyes. We children shook with stifled laughter but one stern glance from my father had a quieting effect.

Good fortune came our way when a farm lad returned from

the city with a talented bride. Her devotion to the music department in the church filled a worthwhile need for many years.

A number of ministers served the church through the years. One man, small in stature had a voice so big it fairly shook the rafters. His sermons were so full of dire prediction that we children almost lost all hope of Heaven. The Other Place was mentioned more often!

Once, a single man was sent as our minister. At the close of the year he moved on to another charge (by his urgent request). There were several spinsters in the community and that man was never without pie and cake. How he escaped their scheming, I'll never understand.

The ministers were all sincere men, dedicated to their work. It couldn't have been an easy task keeping things running smoothly in that large congregation.

The Ladies Aid met regularly for quilting. While I'd hesitate to state that those good women gossiped, I do know that mothers preferred that the children kept busy at play. There just could have been some "juicy bits" of news passed around.

Ice cream socials were happy events. Men turned the hand-operated freezers until they could be turned no more. Rich country cream made the frozen dessert something to remember. Tall light cakes of every flavor were marvels of culinary art.

Children played tag and hide-go-seek in the semi-darkness of the single yard light. Young lovers paired off to steal first kisses within the shadows of their church. Babies, sticky with tastes of the sweet ice cream, grew fretful and the crowd began to break up as the long summer's evening lengthened into night.

Memories yet linger of lighter moments. A gentle grey cat lived at a farmhouse near the church. She often slipped in the open door and was found asleep on a pew at the back of the room. She was a pet of all who attended worship services. One Sunday, two young infants were being baptized when a softly padded sound was heard. We children looked around just in time to see Tabitha, carrying her new baby by it's neck (just as all cats carried their kittens). She was making steady progress towards the minister at the altar. One of the men quietly grabbed the mother and her kitten, placed them outside and shut the door. The coincidence of her timing made all the children insist that Tabitha, being a sort of a church cat, wanted her kittens baptized that morning.

Christmas time was the best of all! A large crowd was always present for our night-time program. A huge cedar tree stood in a corner at the front of the church. It's fragrance greeted each as they entered. Glitter and sparkle adorned each small branch. Near the end of the joyous "birthday party for Jesus," Santa Claus would come stomping up the aisle, his nose as red as the suit he

wore in the zero weather. There was no discriminating against Santa appearing at our Christmas celebration. In our childish reasoning, God and Santa Claus were both good and in a class all by themselves.

The years have passed, older ones have long ago gone to their reward. A younger generation sought education, found jobs, and stayed on to establish homes in the city. The congregation faded until the church could no longer be supported. The era of Mound Chapel was ended. The building was torn down, lumber sold, the land left bare.

The church where I worship is beautiful. Deep crimson of the carpeting, draperies, binders on the hymnals and worship books contrast with the blonde wood of the woodwork and seats. The building is the work of well known architects. Many find peace and comfort within that sanctuary.

Recently, I drove back across the miles to the site of that simple shrine of my childhood. Evening dusk was falling. Trees are tall and stately, wild flowers grow in clumps amid uncut grasses.

My reminiscence of loved ones scattered now all over the world recalled pictures from memory's storehouse. My first lessons from the Bible were taught to me there. I felt sadness that the church was gone.

Then, suddenly, I knew that the little white church had not vanished into nothingness. As I carry these deep, lasting impressions within my heart, the many who worshipped at Mound Chapel are remembering too.

As I turned, in the gathering blackness of night, to leave, a deep benediction seemed to settle over that empty lot of green.

source: The Marysville Advocate, 1970



BARRETT CHURCH

by Maude Jones

The first settlers coming to the Barrett Community were Quakers, then came Methodists, Campbellites, Presbyterians and other denominations. Neighbors visited each other to get acquainted. This led to singing hymns together, reading the Bible and having prayer meetings in their homes. Soon the circuit riders came. They rode their horses over the prairie from home

to home conducting religious services.

The first community religious service was held in 1857 at the Barrett sawmill. Later the meetings were held at the school house. Here funerals and other community meetings were also conducted.

In 1869, a Methodist Episcopal Church organized a class attached to the Frankfort Circuit. This class was attended by all who wished to come, regardless of creed. The community felt a need for a church so in 1899 some ladies drove their horse and buggy around the countryside and solicited money to build one. A loan was obtained from a Missionary Society in the east. Lumber was donated by A.G. Barrett at the sawmill and a plot of ground was donated by H.L. Sage. Men in the area donated labor and by the end of that year Barrett had it's own Methodist Episcopal Church.

Citizens associated with other denominations attended the church and its other activities thus it served as an inter-denominational group and provided a single religious organization that included the entire community.

The congregation organized other related groups such as Sunday school, Epworth League, Ladies Aid, Missionary Society and Women's Christian Temperance Union.

In the early days of the church some of the ministers were: John Farrant, great-grandfather of Wm. Farrant of rural

Frankfort.

An Indian minister, Peter Mathews, who was found by the Mathews family when he was a small boy. They took him into their home and raised him as their own. He became a minister and did much good in the Barrett community.

Preacher Walker was another early day minister. The first ministers I remember came from the Irving Methodist Church but I don't remember their names. Later they came from the Frankfort church.

In my minds eye I can still see that little church. Wooden steps led up to the outside door which opened into a small vestibule where the bell rope hung down from the bell in the steeple and through a hole in the ceiling. Double doors opened into the sanctuary. On the right side, near the back of the room, stood a large coal stove, then rows of pews were placed on down toward the pulpit. Across the center aisle the left side was all filled with pews. A raised pulpit was at the front with space on each side. The right space was a curtained area where small children sat on little red chairs during Sunday school. There was a table and chair for the teacher and also a sand table to keep little hands busy. I remember sitting in my little chair and standing cut-out camels and the three wise men in the sand, while the teacher told us about baby Jesus. The first Bible verses I remember learning were "God is Love" and "Be Ye Kind, One to Another." Later

I taught a primary class there for several years.

The space on the left of the pulpit had a pump organ and stool, later a piano, and couple of pews for the choir. Large kerosene lamps hung from the ceiling and other lamps stood on the organ and the lectern, where an open Bible rested. It was just a plain little church but we liked it.

On Sunday evenings Epworth League held their meetings before the regular services started. The members were mostly young people but anyone could, and did, attend. Each month the members took turns hosting a League Social in their homes.

We played games and had a general good time together. A lunch was served before we went home. These parties were held in the evening and those living in or near Barrett met at the W.C. Montgomery Store, then walked together to wherever the party was held. Sometimes it would be a mile or so away. That was fun too, but we'd be kind of scared when we had to walk past the cemetery, on the way home after dark. We usually ran by it.

I remember, too, the Revival meetings they had at the church. Sometime during the year some preacher would come from away and hold meetings every night for a week. They were always well attended.

We all looked forward to the special church holidays; Christmas, Easter and Children's Day, they didn't celebrate Father's or Mother's Day back then. Programs were planned a

long time in advance and much time was spent learning our parts and practicing after school and on Saturdays.

Something special was planned for each holiday after the services and programs were over. On Christmas Eve, old Santa Claus handed out treats and distributed the gifts from the Christmas tree. He always knew everyone of us too. At Easter time there was a basket dinner at the church and on Children's Day, if the weather was nice, we would have picnic dinner in the Barrett Park. I remember the ladies spreading tablecloths over the grass to put the food on and we got branches from the trees to brush the flies away. Cold water was brought from a spring nearby to make lemonade...who needed ice! We all sat on the ground and ate with our plates on our laps and ignored the flies and chiggers. We were used to them anyway. We enjoyed every bit of it.

In 1931 the membership of the Barrett Church was transferred to the Frankfort Methodist Church. Funerals and other meetings were still held in the Barrett Church for awhile, then it was sold to the late W. Paul Jones, who had it dismantled. He used the lumber to remodel his home in Barrett and to build a chicken house. He later moved both to his farm 1 1/2 miles southwest of Barrett.

The Barrett Church was active for thirty-two years. Not a long time, but it served its purpose and filled a need in the lives

of the early settlers in Barrett and the surrounding community.

Source: Barrett , printed by Frankfort Area News on April 21, 1992

NORTH MARYSVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

by Frances Williams

In 1862 an eloquent speaker, the blind Presbyterian minister, Reverend Charles Parker, who had founded a church in Irving, was asked to deliver the Fourth of July oration in Marysville.

The pioneers had severed ties with their churches, homes, and schools in other states, and were eager to establish a foundation of faith in Marshall County.

Oftentimes, the blind preacher was asked to preach in Marysville to those who hungered to hear "the word" preached. An ardent and zealous missionary, Revered Parker, not only founded the Irving Presbyterian church and Wetmore Academy, and a secondary private school, but extended his preaching to the sparse settlements in Marshall County.

The first Presbyterian worship services in this area were held in the Emery log school house six miles north of Marysville by Reverend Parker, according to an old record book in the possession of the late Alex Campbell in 1940, during the seventieth anniversary of the founding of Memorial Presbyterian Church. Reverend Parker walked from Marysville to the Emery school to preach to scattered settlers, several of Scot descent.

Letters dated 1863 written by relatives in New England, in the possession of descendants of Albert Gallatin Emery, bewailed the lack of religious meetings and educational advantages in the rough frontier country of Marshall County, but were pleased to learn a school had been built and religious meetings were being held. Later services were conducted in MacDonald School.

The log school house was for some years the center of religious life, community singing, school, and spelling bees. It was known as the North Marysville Presbyterian Church.

In the meantime, worship services were being conducted by Reverend Parker, likewise, in the school house in the new town of Marysville in a small frame building west of the St. Joseph and Grand Island Railroad.

After the construction of the new stone school house in 1866 on the present site of Central School, the new school became the center for Presbyterian church services, held on alternate Sundays until 1865.

During the years immediately following the close of the Civil War...while Reverend Parker labored elsewhere...two teachers, who were also ministers, conducted worship services. One was the Reverend John S. Chapman, who supplied the church in Irving and taught classes in Wetmore Academy. Also Reverend W.G. Williams, a Marysville school teacher, preached occasionally.

Ill feelings between the North and South factions which divided the townspeople were fanned by the additional flame of rivalry between the two villages...Marysville and Palmetto.

Only one denomination here was the Methodist Church South, which was organized in 1859 and built a small house of worship in the Palmetto settlement founded by immigrants from South Carolina.

With the slavery question settled by the war and the dissolving of Palmetto, the Southern Methodist Church disbanded and disappeared.

Source: The Marysville Advocate, October 15, 1970



TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF IRVING

by Lillian C. Deibert

According to the Parish Register, Trinity Episcopal Church at Irving was incorporated in 1874; but they had no church building. The Presbyterians were a larger group, a stronger sect in the small pioneer village of Irving, and had early erected a neat stone church. The terrible tornado in May of 1879 leveled that church except for the belfry tower. Before the Presbyterians could re-build, the timing seemed exactly right for the Episcopalians to erect the church they had long been wishing for. On a corner lot on the main street of Irving, they quickly built a

church of simple architectural design, known then as "board and batten." It may have been built of native cottonwood lumber which was the cheapest lumber available. Cottonwood had a strong tendency to warp, the battens were necessary to hold the upright boards in shape. The trim new church was painted a bright yellow.

About 1910, Mrs. Frances DeForrest who had recently moved to Irving from Atchison, generously gave funds, and the frame church was sheathed in cement blocks. Mrs. DeForrest also at this time gave to the church a handsome oak altar. The Reverend P.B. Peabody, rector of St. Marks at Blue Rapids served Trinity at Irving as well. Apart from his ecclesiastical duties, he was an ardent and an informed ornithologist. He escorted the children of the communities on field trips, and introduced them to the wonders of nature.

The parishioners of Trinity included Mary Kemp, the Pipers, Catherine Steward and her married daughter, Elsie Luedke, the Laytons, the Stiles, June and Nathan Wentworth, the Blaneys, Ann Beard, the Kautzs, the John Rohrs, Russell Patterson (who made the processional cross) and his sister Elizabeth. For the most part, the accessories of the church were extremely simple...crafted by hand with loving care.

In the 1930's and later as the young people grew up and moved away, Trinity at Irving began to decline. Various priests

continued to serve the church in this period, coming from other parishes. Eventually there were so few communicants left at Irving Trinity that the Revered Edward L. Skinner felt obliged to discontinue services altogether.

It is the traditional custom in the Episcopal way for the furnishings of its churches to be considered the property of the diocese whose guide and administration is the Bishop. The Reverend Goodrich Fenner, Bishop of the Diocese of Northeast Kansas could see no prospect of Trinity at Irving regaining its strength. Accordingly, he gave permission for its furnishings to be moved to places where there was greater need. In the 1940's and early 1950's the interior of the gray block church was stripped. The pews and kneelers were taken to Holton, the altar was moved to St. Marks at Blue Rapids. So Trinity was left a shell that began to fall into disrepair. Some new uses were proposed for it. A Presbyterian minister wished he might have it for a study and counseling room. A group of young people thought it would be nice for a recreation center. None of these proposals pleased the handful of remaining parishioners. They had a dream of restoring the church as a place of worship. It was a far-fetched idea, seemingly impossible. At length, though, their dream...like a miracle...did come true.

They were encouraged and greatly helped in this endeavor by the Reverend Wilfred Hotaling of the Church of the Epiphany in

Concordia. He had salvaged a beautiful white altar with gilded trim from a church being demolished in his area. He loaned that altar to Trinity. The Presbyterian church at Irving had lately acquired new oak pews, the discarded old ones were available at a slight cost. John Lindell gave generously of his time and energy to paint the interior walls and woodwork. Others too, volunteered their labor. A local carpenter came to our aid...to restore the communion rail and to shorten the reclaimed pews which had proved too long to stand in parallel rows. It was discovered that colored glass similar to that in the original church windows could be had in Wahoo, Nebraska. A drive to Wahoo procured new panes of blue, rose, and green colored glass; broken planes were replaced with the new. Inspired by the white altar, the interior decoration became white with few dark accents. Walls, window and door trim blossomed into an expanse of white; the old pews were fleshed with white paint except for the end arms which received mahogany stain and varnish. The wood floor boards were painted gray. With sunlight streaming through either the east or west stained glass windows, the whole interior was transformed into a place of self radiance and quiet repose.

The Reverend Goodrich Fenner retired as Bishop of the Diocese of Northeast Kansas, and the Reverend Edward C. Turner was named as his successor. He was supportive of our efforts to restore Trinity Church. He was pleased that thirty-five

years after the last confirmation service, it was his privilege to receive a new confirmation class into Trinity at Irving.

On April 4, 1955, Ethel Wentworth Rohr of Irving died. Three days later, her funeral was held at Trinity. Her life had swung full circle. She had been baptized, confirmed, married, and buried from Trinity Episcopal at Irving.

The Reverend Lyle Hampton, vicar at St. Paul's in Marysville and St. Mark's in Blue Rapids began to include Trinity on his Sunday rounds, holding regular morning services there. Often visitors joined us. A wedding was solemnized in the church on an August Sunday afternoon in 1956. On Christmas night in 1958, a joint communion service of St. Paul's, St. Mark's and Trinity was held at Trinity. That was a red-letter night indeed!

In the end---1959---the church became the property of the United States government, because the townsite of Irving was included in the basin requirement for the building of Tuttle Creek Dam. Like all other buildings in the pathway of that monstrosity, the church was torn down. The Diocese of Northeast, Kansas was paid its appraised value, even given a second payment because of a second appraisal. Only memories were left to those who had loved the church and worshipped there, but they were warm, good memories.



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH AT AFTON

by Lois Cohorst

Afton is a ghost town that stemmed from the early days of the 1880's and the Gay Nineties. It was a time of growth and prosperity for German farmers, who settled on Walnut Creek. The town once provided a general store, a post office with a dance hall on the second floor of the building, a creamery, a blacksmith shop, and Indian John, who substituted as a doctor providing his own tonics.

As more German Lutherans arrived at the Lutheran settlement,

a Lutheran congregation called Trinity was formed on Easter Monday, April 26, 1886. Although the congregation adopted their own constitution, they spent their first twenty years without a church building of their own. Services were held at the Danish Lutheran Church north of Afton, and they were in the German language. In those early days, the congregation was served by ministers from Trinity near Hanover and Zion at Herkimer.

The blacksmith started business in Afton in 1895. The shop was operated by John Guenther and was well known for wagon repair, blacksmith, and custom work. Mr. Guenther built the shop and a residence, but when his wife died in about 1905, he lost interest in his work and sold his residence, shop, and the land to the Trinity Lutheran congregation for \$800.

The Lutherans converted the house into a parsonage and the blacksmith shop into a barn. That same year they decided to build a 40 by 28 foot church with an eight-foot hall. For the dedication in June of 1906, the church stood proud at the east end of the former blacksmith property. The congregation bought a reed organ that same year for \$99.

Trinity Lutheran had 14 charter members, John Scheibe, Martin Holle, Adam Sachs, Reinhard Frohberg, H. Behrens, D. Blanke, H. Dettke, Conrad Crome, William Genschorck, Henry Johannes, A. Tied, Herman Scheibe, R. Dettke, and Henry Stohs. Revered John Rabold was the first resident minister and was

installed in August of 1906.

In spite of the opposition by Lutheran farmers, a building, south of the church, was erected for the purpose of a saloon. Men loafed during bad weather days, and various bands played on week nights and people danced. But on Sunday mornings, the Trinity Lutheran Church's bell rang and congregational singing filled the Afton air.

Indian John continued to attract people to his shack high on the bank of Walnut Creek where he brewed his herbs and diagnosed illnesses with his penetrating eyes. The saloon provided a place where romance bloomed throughout the community and it seemed that the dance hall was the answer to the community's Saturday night entertainment. Many a band accompanied couple dances with waltzes, schottisches, polkas, and square dances. Pecenka's orchestra performed as well as the Whipples, the Afton Band directed by Richard Ruetti, and the Pecenka Band.

In time, transportation improved. The town began to fail. The Afton band broke, up, fire destroyed Indian John's shack, the murder of the saloon keeper's sweetheart and his own suicide, as well as the discouraged rowdies, closed the saloon and ended the Saturday night dances. The town died, and in 1921, only the store and the church remained. The store was sold and razed the same year.

The church remained strong. In 1929, a school building about 28 x 16 ft. was erected as a north annex to the church. In preparation of the church's 50th anniversary, a new electric organ was purchased at a cost of \$1200. However, in time, the parochial school closed, although Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, catechism, and other educational classes were held at the church. Societies of the church were Bethesda Ladies Aid, the Men's Club, and the Youth Fellowship which was a joint group with Zion at Herkimer. Trinity celebrated its fiftieth birthday in 1956.

In 1957, Afton lost its pastor, and the congregation suffered a six year pastoral vacancy. Pastor Walter Lebein of Herkimer filled the vacancy as well as Pastor Hasz of Bremen, Pastor Hesse of Wymore, and Pastor John Knippenberg of Odell. Pastor Knippenberg was instrumental in organizing a dual parish between Zion Lutheran of Herkimer and Trinity of Afton. It took place in 1962. Trinity and Zion shared Pastor Nathan Wadewitz, who was assigned from seminary. However, by June of 1967, Pastor Wadewitz left and the dual parish was in a vacancy again. Pastor Chalmer Westhoff of Bremen filled-in, followed by Pastor Adolph Leimer of Barnes. Then on July 7, 1968, candidate Curtis Melcher was installed as Pastor of the dual parish.

Trinity had improved their parish by converting the parsonage into a parish hall. The new organ was dedicated in 1975, and

modernizing the church took place in preparation of a 1981 anniversary. After Pastor Melcher resigned, the church fell back into vacancy until candidate White was assigned from the seminary. He served the church a few years and after he left, a vicar served the dual parish. After David Ersland finished his vicarage and left to take his own pastoral position in 1995, Trinity voted to disband and allow its 30 members a transfer to another Lutheran church. Trinity Lutheran Church served the Afton community from 1906 to 1995 performing numerous baptisms, confirmations, marriages and burials.

"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but They name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake." Psalm 115:1.

references: Byron and Eulalia Guise, "An Affair With The Past and Trinity's anniversary book history.



ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH OF HERKIMER

By Lois Chorst

As many as five generations had known the familiar liturgy, for many years spoken in German, at Zion Lutheran Church, which served the incorporated village of Herkimer and vicinity. However, on March 5, 1995, the congregation voted to begin the process of finding another church of Missouri Synod to join.

Zion Evangelical Lutheran was organized January 1, 1892 by the Reverend J.H. F. Hoyer with charter members signing the

constitution. The charter members were: H.J. Brockmeyer, C. Kuelper, John Klink, W.H. Koeneke, Fred Holle, Wilhelm Holle, Ernst Hormann, Henry Frauhiger.

The first meeting was held on the first Sunday in Advent, 1891. In this meeting Fred Holle was the chairman and C. Kuelper, secretary. The following year, January 1, 1892, under the leadership of Pastor Hoyer, the congregation was formally organized. The first officers were: H. Brockmeyer, chairman; C. Kuelper, secretary; H.W. Koeneke, treasurer. The board of Elders was Wm. Thiele, Fred Holle, Ernest Hormann. Since the congregation did not have its own pastor, Reverend H. Wein of Clay Center was called. This pastor accepted the call to Zion and was installed as the first pastor of this parish on the 23rd Sunday after Trinity, 1892. Pastor Hoyer officiated at the installation.

In 1892, during the ministry of Pastor H. Wein, a church building was built on ground donated to the congregation by Henry Koeneke, Sr. In 1894, a parsonage was also built on the same piece of ground.

In 1894, the congregation purchased an acre of ground north of Herkimer from John Lutzemeier for \$75.00 to use as a cemetery. In the summer of 1908, the church was slightly remodeled and a room was added to the East which served as a school. It was dedicated September 6, 1908.

Pastor Wein served Zion Lutheran for 19 years and in

November, 1911, he accepted a call to Corning, Missouri. During the vacancy, Pastor W. Cook served Zion congregation. A call was extended to Reverend H.C. Marting of Downs, Kansas. He accepted and was installed on the second Sunday in Advent, 1911.

In 1914, during the ministry of Pastor Marting, the congregation purchased a reed organ. The following year, the parsonage was considerably enlarged and in 1916, the church and parsonage was wired for electricity. The electrical work was donated by Henry Brockmeyer as a Christmas gift to the congregation. In 1917, the parish observed its 25th anniversary. On October 5, 1919, the congregation decided to join The Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod. In 1929, it was decided to add a teacher to the school. Until that time, the school had been served by the pastor. In 1931, it was decided to observe worship service once a month in English. Before, the services were held in German.

In October of that year, Pastor Marting accepted a call to Gladstone, Nebraska, however under his leadership, the congregation had grown in numbers and had continued to be faithful in the instruction of God's word. The vacancy pastor was Reverend A.C. Traugott of Bremen, who served Zion until a call was extend to Reverend Henry Buss in which he accepted.

On March 13, 1932, Reverend Henry Buss was installed as

pastor and served Zion Lutheran Church very faithfully, in spite of the difficult conditions created by the depression and the drought of the 1930s. In 1933, Pastor Buss was instrumental in founding the Ladies Aid. In 1934, the church building was again renovated, a new carpet was laid in the chancel area, and other changes were made.

In August of 1942, the congregation observed its Golden Anniversary with special services of thanksgiving in the Dierking Grove. Speakers were Pastor Hans Wein, H.C. Martin and George Hoyer. In other actions that year, a double garage was added to the church property.

Pastor Buss served Herkimer until October 3, 1945 at which time he accepted a call to Bellefont, Kansas after a ministry of 14 years. Pastor Paul Ludwig of Bremen-Bethlehem became the vacancy pastor.

To provide better instructional facilities for the children, a lot of ground on the south side of the church was purchased on October 25, 1944 from Mr. John Meyer. In 1945, the church building which belonged to the Evangelical-Reformed Church in Herkimer, was purchased and used as a school and parish hall. In 1947, this building was moved from its original location to the south lot and converted into a school and parish hall. The building was enlarged with a room on the east end used for religious instruction and a hall on the west end. A basement with

a fully equipped kitchen was provided, and the school was officially dedicated on August 29, 1948.

Reverend Walter Lebien accepted a call on April 23rd, 1946, and he became the fourth pastor to assume duties at Zion. In 1951, a gas furnace was installed in the church and in March of 1952, the church building was completely remodeled, repainted, and other changes were made in preparation of the sixtieth anniversary celebration.

During Reverend Lebien's time at this parish, the congregation began to decrease in membership due to the exodus of young people to the city, partly because of the mechanization of farm equipment. Yet, the congregation continued to carry on the work of the Kingdom of God and support Synod in its mission activities.

The congregation continued to provide instruction for the children in the form of a religious class held every day before children attended public school classes. Also, Sunday school classes were maintained, which had come about during Reverend Lebien's tenure as Zion's pastor. Adult Bible classes were continued, first after worship services on Sunday mornings, and later twice a month in the evening during the week.

In the fall of 1966, the church was painted and in the spring of 1967, the remodeling of the west side of the cemetery was completed in preparation for the 75th anniversary. Also the

parish hall was re-decorated.

In April of 1952, a new Hammond organ was dedicated in time for the sixtieth anniversary celebration. Special speakers for that occasion were Revered H.C. Marting of Seward, Nebraska, and Reverend W.E. Buss of Lyons, Kansas. Then on January 7, 1957, it was decided to drop all German services. In November of 1960, Reverend Walter Lebien accepted a call to Vassar, Kansas, after faithfully serving Zion 14 years. At this time, the congregation asked Reverend Wilson Maurer of Marysville to become its vacancy pastor.

Pastor Maurer served Zion's vacancy for nearly three years. On February 25, 1962, Zion of Herkimer and Trinity of Waterville (Afton) formed a dual parish. Since Zion had ineffectively called pastors from the field all this while, they decided to call a seminary candidate. Thus, in May of 1963, the Board of Assignments assigned candidate Nathan Wadewitz to become Zion's fifth pastor. Pastor Wadewitz was ordained and installed September 22, 1963.

Pastor Wadewitz served Zion and Trinity faithfully from September 1963 to June of 1967 when he accepted a call to Trinity Lutheran Church, Mission, Kansas. He preached his farewell sermon on the third Sunday after Trinity. Pastor Wilson Maurer again agreed to serve Zion as vacancy Pastor. The congregation once more began calling a pastor to shepherd its

flock. The congregation continued as God's mission to the community and by God's grace was permitted to celebrate its 75th anniversary on August 27, 1967. For this anniversary, Pastors Walter Lebien, Henry Buss and Nathan Wadewitz were in attendance conducting the special thanksgiving services.

The next pastor to accept Zion's call was Reverend Curtis Melcher, who faithfully agreed to serve both Zion and Afton. It was during his pastoral term that on August 3, 1977, a fire destroyed the 85 year old church building. Church records, a statue of Christ, a lectern and the electric organ were among moveable contents saved. Unfortunately, the church was only insured for \$10,000, hardly enough to rebuild.

For a time, the congregation met in the school building, which worked so well that it was decided to remodel the school and use it for a church. The school served Zion's community very well.

After Pastor Melcher resigned as minister, Zion began to call pastors again. Again, they resorted to the seminary. Pastor White was called and installed as the pastor of the dual parish of Zion and Afton. Pastor White accepted a call in 1993, leaving Zion without a pastor once again.

Considering Zion and Afton's diminishing congregations, a decision was made to call a vicar to serve both churches. Pastor David Ersland served the membership as vicar. By the beginning of 1995, the membership had dwindled to less than 100 members,

likewise, Trinity at Afton had less than 30 members, all due to the small rural population. Zion voted to disband allowing members to join either of the other Lutheran churches.

sources: The Marysville Advocate and Zion Lutheran's history booklet





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